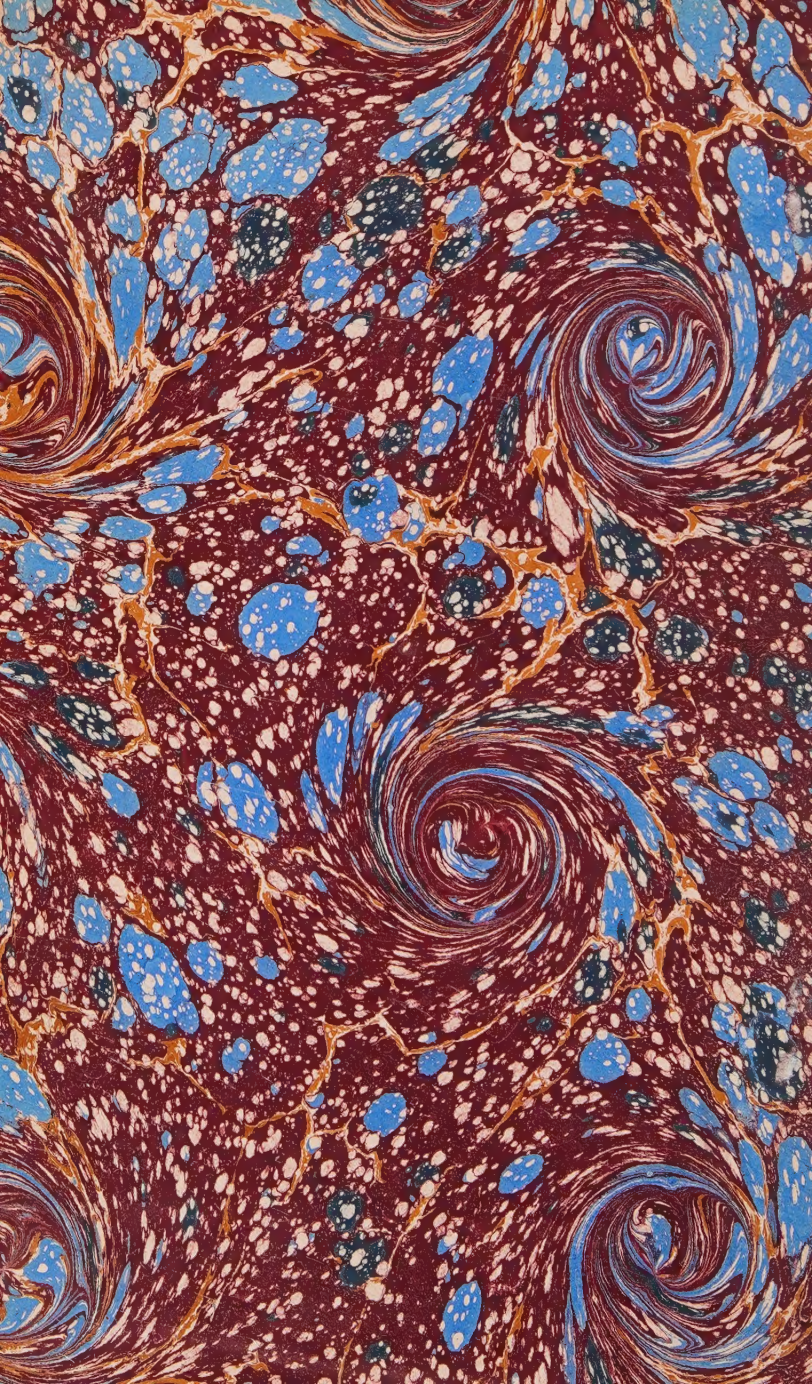

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NORTHERN MYTHOLOGY,

COMPRISING THE PRINCIPAL

POPULAR TRADITIONS AND SUPERSTITIONS

OF

SCANDINAVIA, NORTH GERMANY

AND

THE NETHERLANDS.

COMPILED FROM ORIGINAL AND OTHER SOURCES,

BY

BENJAMIN THORPE,

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AT MUNICH.

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FROM

THE EDITOR.

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PREFACE.

NORTHERN literature, more particularly that branch of it which is connected with the early times and antiquities of Scandinavia and the north of Germany, having of late become an object of increasing interest in many parts of Europe, the idea seemed to me not unreasonable that a work, comprehensive yet not too voluminous, exhibiting the ancient mythology and principal mythologic traditions of those countries, might be found both useful and entertaining not only to the lover of Northern lore at home and to the English traveller over those interesting lands, but also to the English antiquary, on account of the intimate connection subsisting between the heathenism of the Germanic nations of the Continent and those of his own Saxon forefathers, manifest traces of which are to be found in the works of our earliest chroniclers and poets. It was under this impression that the present work was undertaken.

The first, or purely mythologic, part was originally intended to consist of a mere translation of the 'Asalære' of Professor N. M. Petersen of Copenhagen; but on com-

paring the several myths[1] as given in that work with the text of the two Eddas, it appearing that the conciseness observed by Prof. Petersen, and which he, no doubt, found necessary to his object[2], not unfrequently impaired the interest of the narrative, I resolved, while following the plan of the 'Asalære,' to have recourse to the Eddas themselves, and exhibit the several fables or myths unabridged, in all their fullness, as they appear in those authorities.

The interpretation of these myths, forming the second part of the first volume, is, with slight exceptions, from the work of Prof. Petersen, though considerably abridged, particularly as regards the etymological portion, which, if

[1] I use the term *myth* rather in the sense of *legend* or *fable* than in the signification now more usually attached to it, that of supposing each divinity a personification of the powers of nature; a theory which assumes a degree of mental culture to have existed among the early settlers in the North wholly incompatible with all we know concerning them. As equally applicable here, I will venture to repeat my own words used on a former similar occasion: "In these meagre traditions exist, I firmly believe, faint traces of persons that once had being and of actions that once took place; but that they generally require a *mythic* interpretation, is to me more than questionable." (Lappenberg's England, i. p. 98.)

Much more consistent with probability I consider the view taken by the Rev. A. Faye, but to which he does not seem to adhere (see Introduction to vol. ii. p. xii.), which is the converse of the theory before-mentioned, viz. "that unacquaintance with nature and her powers, combined with the innate desire of finding a reason for and explaining the various natural phenomena, that must daily and hourly attract the attention of mankind, has led them to seek the causes of these phenomena in the power of beings who, as they supposed, had produced them:

> Like 'the poor Indian, whose untutor'd mind
> Sees God in clouds or hears him in the wind.'

....."These phenomena were too numerous and various to allow the ascribing of them to a single being, and therefore a number of supernatural beings were imagined, whose dangerous influence and pernicious wrath it was sought to avert by sacrifices and other means."

[2] The 'Asalære' forms a part only of the work 'Danmarks Historie i Hedenhold.' 3 vols. small 8vo.

given at length, could hardly have failed of being tedious to the majority of readers in this country, and the more so as much of it is necessarily based on conjecture; an objection from which, I fear, that what is here given will be pronounced not wholly free. With this deduction, Prof. Petersen's illustrations, as contained in the 'Asalære,' and in his more recent valuable work on the same subject [1], have in general been adopted, as bearing, at least in my judgement, a nearer resemblance to probability than any others with which I am acquainted; though manifesting, perhaps, too strong a tendency to the mythic theory, from which I have already ventured to express my dissent. A small, though estimable work, by Prof. Keyser of Christiania, has also been frequently and not unprofitably consulted [2].

That many of the Northern myths are after all densely obscure is a lamentable fact; they were probably not much less so to the Northern pagans themselves, whose forefathers, it may reasonably be supposed, brought with them no great stock of recondite lore from the mountains of central Asia to their present settlements in Scandinavia. Some portion of their obscurity may, however, be perhaps ascribed to the form in which they have been preserved; as even in Sæmund's Edda, their oldest source, they appear in a garb which affords some ground for the conjecture, that the integrity of the myth has been occasionally sacrificed to the structure and finish of the poem; while in

[1] Nordisk Mythologi. Forlæsninger af N. M. Petersen. København, 1849, 8vo.

[2] Nordmændenes Religionsforfatning i Hedendommen, af R. Keyser. Christiania, 1847, 12mo.

the later Edda of Snorri their corruption is, in several instances, glaringly evident, some of them there appearing in a guise closely bordering on the ludicrous[1]; a circumstance, perhaps, ascribable, at least in part, to the zeal and sagacity of the Christian missionaries and early converts, who not unwisely considered ridicule one of the most efficacious methods of extirpating the heathenism that still lingered among the great mass of the people.

But the myths of the Odinic faith were doomed to undergo a yet greater debasement; their next and final degradation being into a middle-age fiction or a nursery tale, in which new dress they are hardly recognizable. A few instances of such metamorphoses will be found in the course of the work, and more are to be met with in the popular tales of Scandinavia, Germany, the Netherlands and Italy[2].

But besides these, and apparently of equal if not higher antiquity, there are many traditions and superstitions which cannot be connected with what we know of the Odinic faith. These, it may not unreasonably be conjectured, are relics of the mythology of the Fins and other primitive inhabitants of Scandinavia, who were driven northwards or into the mountain-recesses by Odin and his followers, and in whom and in their posterity we are to look for the giants (jotnar, jætter, jutuler, etc.), the dwarfs and the elves, with whom the superstition of later

[1] See Thor's visit to Utgarda-Loki (p. 56), and Loki's pranks to make Skadi laugh (p. 45).

[2] See Faye's Norske Sagn; Thiele, Danmarks Folkesagn; Afzelius' Svenska Folkets Sago-Häfder; Grimm's Kinder und Hausmärchen; Wolf's Niederländische Sagen; the Pentamerone of Basile, etc. etc.

times peopled the woods, the hills, the rivers and mountain-caverns of the North.

Thus far I have spoken solely of the mythology and early traditions of the three northern kingdoms, and with these it was originally my intention to close the work; but at the suggestion of one, whose judgement I hold in no light estimation, I was induced to continue my labour, by adding to it a selection of the principal later popular traditions and superstitions of Scandinavia, North Germany and the Netherlands; and thus present to the reader a view of Germanic mythology and popular belief from the north of Norway to Belgium, and from the earliest times down to the present. To many—should my book, unlike its predecessors, fortunately fall into the hands of many—this will, perhaps, be regarded as not the least interesting part of it, from the circumstance of its supplying matter for comparison with the popular superstitions and usages of our own country, to not a few of which those here recorded will be found closely to correspond. To the ethnographer the subject cannot be one of indifference, when even the general reader cannot fail of being struck by the strong similarity and often perfect identity of the traditions and superstitions current in countries far remote from each other and without any known link of connection. That many of the traditions and superstitions of England and Scotland have their counterparts in Scandinavia and the north of Germany, can easily be accounted for by the original identity of, and subsequent intercourse, as friends or foes, between the several nations; but when we meet with a tradition in the far North, and a similar one not only in the south of Germany, but in the south of France,

and even in Naples, according to what theory of the migration of peoples are we to explain the phenomenon? One inference may, however, be drawn with tolerable certainty, viz. the great antiquity of many of these legends, some of which are, indeed, traceable to Hebrew and Hindu sources[1].

By way of introduction to the matter contained in the third volume, I have given in the Appendix at the end of this volume, a brief sketch, chiefly from the work of William Müller[2], of the old German mythology, so far as it appears unconnected with the Scandinavian.

From the great number of traditions contained in the works indicated in their respective places, I have chiefly selected those that seemed to spring from the old mythology, or at least from *an* old mythology; as many of the supernatural beings, of whom we read in the traditions even of the three northern kingdoms, are not to be found in the Odinic system, and probably never had a place in it; but, as we have already said, were the divinities of those earlier races, who, it may be supposed, by intermarriages with their Gothic conquerors and a gradual return to their ancient home, contributed in no small degree to form the great mass of the people. Hence the introduc-

[1] Of the German popular superstitions some may be traced to the Greek and Roman writers: that of the *Bilsen-schnitters*, for instance (see p. 245), is to be found in Apuleius, and the same is probably the case with others. The inference seems to be, that such are not genuine German superstitions, but that the South is their native soil, whence they have been transplanted to Germany or, at least, enrolled as German among the superstitions of that country.

[2] Geschichte und Systeme der Altdeutschen Religion von Wilhelm Müller. Göttingen, 1844, 8vo, in which a great part of Grimm's Deutsche Mythologie is given in an abridged form.

tion among and adoption by the later population of these alien objects of veneration or dread.

To facilitate the use of the 'Northern Mythology' as much as possible to the general reader, the passages quoted from the Eddas and Sagas are rendered literally into English. Of the poetical extracts the versions are alliterative, in humble imitation of the originals.

With respect to the orthography adopted in the Mythology, it may be observed that, in the proper names of most frequent occurrence, the Old Norsk termination *r* (*n*) of the nominative masculine (sometimes feminine), is, in conformity with common custom, usually omitted; and *d* is generally written instead of the old Þ and Ð (*th*, *dh*): as Frey for Freyr, Odin for Oðinn, Brynhild for Brynhildr. The Swedish (anciently also Danish) å and its Danish equivalent aa are pronounced like *a* in *warm*, or *oa* in *broad*. The pronunciation nearly resembles the German, *j* being pronounced as the English *y*, and *g* being always hard before *i* and *e*, as in *give*, *get*, and other English words of Anglo-Saxon origin.

B. T.

*** The frontispiece, representing the scene described in the note at p. 132, is from a copy in Canciani, Leges Barbarorum. The original is in a manuscript of Snorri's Edda.

NORTHERN MYTHOLOGY.

INTRODUCTION.

TO every one who looks back on his past life, it presents itself rather through the beautifying glass of fancy, than in the faithful mirror of memory; and this is more particularly the case the further this retrospection penetrates into the past, the more it loses itself in obscure images without any definite outline, the more it approaches to the earliest remembrances of childhood, and, in general, the more we strive to give to that which is dark and half obliterated renewed life in our minds. Then does a single incident, which in reality was probably of a very ordinary character, expand itself into a wonderful event, the heart beats, and a longing after the lost peace, the vanished happiness, creates a dream, a state which, independent of man, has no existence, yet has its home deep in his breast. Among nations in the mass the same feeling prevails; they also draw a picture of their infancy in glittering colours; the fewer traditions they have, the more they embellish them; the less trustworthy those traditions are, the more

they sparkle in the brilliancy which fancy has lent them, the more the vain-glory of the people will continue to cherish, to ennoble and diffuse them from generation to generation, through succeeding ages. Man's ambition is twofold: he will not only live in the minds of posterity; he will also have lived in ages long gone by; he looks not only forwards, but backwards also; and no people on earth is indifferent to the fancied honour of being able to trace its origin to the gods, and of being ruled by an ancient race.

He who devotes himself to delineate the state of a people in its earliest times, takes on himself a task of difficulty. He shares with all his predecessors the same feeling, by which the departed attracts, even, perhaps, because it is no more, the very darkness dazzles, because it is so black: they who should guide him are probably blind themselves, and of those who wandered before him, many have, no doubt, taken devious paths.

Every inquiry into the internal condition of a nation must necessarily turn on three points: the land, the people, and the state; but these three are so variously interwoven with each other, that their investigation must resolve itself into several subordinate sections: it must set out with religion, as the element which pervades all, and is itself pervaded by all. We begin, therefore, our undertaking with a most difficult inquiry, a view of the whole mythology of the North, which we shall consider in three sections:—I. the mythic matter, II. the several ways in which it has been attempted to explain it, III. an attempt at explanation derived from the matter itself, and founded on the original sources.

SECTION I.

A view of the Mythology of the North begins with the Creation. In the beginning of time a world existed in the north called Niflheim (Niflheimr), in the middle of which was a well called Hvergelmir, from which flowed twelve rivers[1]. In the south part there was another world, Muspellheim, (Muspellzheimr)[2], a light and hot, a flaming and radiant world, the boundary of which was guarded by Surt (Surtr) with a flaming sword. Cold and heat contended with each other. From Niflheim flowed the poisonous cold streams called Elivâgar[3], which became hardened into ice, so that one layer of ice was piled on another in Ginnunga-gap[4], or the abyss of abysses, which faced the north; but from the south issued heat from Muspellheim, and the sparks glittered so that the south part of Ginnunga-gap was as light as the purest air. The heat met the ice, which melted and dripped; the drops then, through his power who sent forth the heat, received life, and a human form was produced called Ymir[5], the progenitor of the Frost-giants (Hrímþursar), who by the Frost-giants is also called Aurgelmir, that is, *the ancient mass or chaos*. He was not a god, but was evil, together with all his race. As yet there was neither

[1] Their names are Svavl, Gunnþra, Fiörm, Fimbul, þul, Slíð, Hríð, Sylg, Ylg, Víð, Leipt, Giöll, which last is nearest to the barred gates of Hel. Gylfaginning, p. 4.

[2] The word Muspell has disappeared from all the Germanic tongues, except the Old-Saxon and the Old High German, where it signifies *fire* at the destruction of the world. See 'Heliand' *passim*, and the fragment on the day of judgement, 'Muspilli,' both edited by Schmeller.

[3] From el, *a storm*, and vágr (pl. vágar), *river, wave.*

[4] From ginn, *wide, expanded,* occurring only in composition.

[5] Ym from ymia, *to make a noise, rush, roar.* He who sent forth the heat is not Surt, who is only the guardian of Muspellheim, but a supreme ineffable being.

sand nor sea nor cool waves, neither earth nor grass nor vaulted heaven, but only Ginnunga-gap, *the abyss of abysses*. Ymir was nourished from four streams of milk, which flowed from the udder of the cow Audhumla (Auðhumla), a being that came into existence by the power of Surt. From Ymir there came forth offspring while he slept: for having fallen into a sweat, from under his left arm there grew a man and a woman, and one of his feet begat a son by the other. At this time, before heaven and earth existed, the Universal Father (Alföðr) was among the Hrimthursar, or Frost-giants[1].

The cow Audhumla licked the frost-covered stones that were salt, and the first day, towards evening, there came forth from them a man's hair, the second day a head, the third day an entire man. He was called Buri (the producing); he was comely of countenance, tall and powerful. His son, Bör (the produced), was married to Bestla (or Belsta), a daughter of the giant Bölthorn, and they had three sons, Odin (Oðinn), Vili and Ve. These brothers were gods, and created heaven and earth[2].

Bör's sons slew the giant Ymir, and there ran so much blood from his wound that all the frost-giants were drowned in it, except the giant Bergelmir (whose father was Thrudgelmir (Þrúðgelmir), and whose grandfather was Aurgelmir), who escaped with his wife on a chest (lúðr), and continued the race of the frost-giants. But Bör's sons carried the body of Ymir into the middle of Ginnunga-gap, and formed of it the earth, of his blood the seas and waters, of his bones the mountains, of his teeth and grinders and those bones that were broken, they made stones and pebbles; from the blood that flowed from his wounds they made the great impassable ocean, in which

[1] Gylf. paragr. 3, 4, 5, 6. Voluspá, Str. 2, 3. Vafþrúdnism. Str. 30–33. Hyndluljóð, Str. 32.

[2] Gylf. 6. Hyndluljóð, Str. 29. Runatalsþ. Oð. Str. 3.

they fixed the earth, around which it lies in a circle; of his skull they formed the heaven, and set it up over the earth with four regions, and under each corner placed a dwarf, the names of whom were Austri, Vestri, Northri, Suthri; of his brain they formed the heavy clouds, of his hair the vegetable creation, and of his eyebrows a wall of defence against the giants round Midgard (Miþgarðr), the middlemost part of the earth, the dwelling-place of the sons of men[1]. They then took the sparks and glowing cinders that were cast out of Muspellheim, and set them in heaven, both above and below, to illumine heaven and earth. They also assigned places for the lightning and fiery meteors, some in heaven, and some unconfined under heaven, and appointed to them a course. Hence, "as it is said in old philosophy," arose the division of years and days. Thus Bör's sons raised up the heavenly disks, and the sun shone on the cold stones, so that the earth was decked with green herbs. The sun from the south followed the moon, and cast her[2] right arm round the heavenly horses' door (the east); but she knew not where her dwelling lay, the moon knew not his power, nor did the stars know where they had a station. Then the holy gods consulted together, and gave to every light its place, and a name to the new moon (Nyi), and to the waning moon (Niþi), and gave names to the morning and the mid-day, to the forenoon (undern) and the evening, that the children of men, sons of time, might reckon the years thereafter[3].

Night (Nótt) and Day (Dagr) were of opposite races. Night, of giant race, was dark, like her father, the giant Nörvi (or Narfi). She was first married to Naglfari, and had by him a son named Aud (Auðr); secondly to Anar

[1] See p. 10.

[2] In the Germanic tongues the sun is feminine, the moon masculine.

[3] Gylf. 7, 8. Voluspá, Str. 4, 5, 6. Vafþrúdnism. Str. 20, 21, 29, 35. Grimnism. Str. 40, 41.

(or Onar); their daughter was Earth (Iörð); lastly to Delling, who was of the race of the Æsir, and their son was Day, who was fair, bright and beautiful, through his paternal descent. All-father took Night and Day, and gave them two horses and two cars, and placed them in heaven, that they might ride successively, in twenty-four hours' time, round the earth. Night rides first with her horse which is named Hrîmfaxi, that bedews the earth each morn with the drops from his bit. He is also called Fiörsvartnir[1]. The horse belonging to Day is called Skinfaxi, from whose shining mane light beams forth over heaven and earth. He is also called Glad (Glaðr) and Drösul. The Moon and the Sun are brother and sister; they are the children of Mundilföri, who, on account of their beauty, called his son Mâni, and his daughter Sôl; for which presumption the gods in their anger took brother and sister and placed them in heaven, and appointed Sôl to drive the horses that draw the chariot of the sun, which the gods had formed, to give light to the world, of the sparks from Muspellheim. Sôl was married to a man named Glen (Glenur, Glaur), and has to her car the horses Arvakur (the watchful), and Alsvith (the rapid), under whose shoulders the gods placed an ice-cold breeze to cool them. Svalin (the cooling) is the name of a shield that stands before the sun, which would else set waves and mountains on fire. Mâni directs the course of the moon, and regulates Nyi and Nithi. He once took up two children from the earth, Bil and Hiuki (Hviki), as they were going from the well of Byrgir, bearing on their shoulders the bucket Sæg, and the pole Simul. Their father was Vidfinn; they follow Mâni, as may be observed from the earth. There are also two wolves to be mentioned, one of which, named Sköll, follows the sun, and which she fears will swallow

[1] Finn Magnusen considers Fiörsvartnir as the name of a second horse belonging to Night, and so of Glad. Lex. Myth. *sub voce.*

her; the other called Hati, the son of Hrodvitnir, runs before the sun, and strives to seize on the moon[1], and so in the end it will be. The mother of these wolves is a giantess, who dwells in a wood to the east of Midgard, called Jarnvid (Járnviðr), in which those female demons (tröllkonur) dwell called Jarnvids (Járnviðjur). She brought forth many sons, who are giants, and all in the form of wolves. One of this race, named Managarm, is said to be the most powerful; he will be sated with the lives of all dying persons; he will swallow up the moon, and thereby besprinkle both heaven and air with blood. Then will the sun lose its brightness, and the winds rage and howl in all directions, as it is said[2]:—

Eastward sat the crone
in the iron wood,
and there brought forth
Fenrir's offspring.
Of these shall be
one worse than all,
the moon's devourer
in a demon's guise.
Fill'd shall he be
with the fated's lives,
the gods' abode
with the red blood shall stain.
Then shall the summer's
sun be darken'd,
all weather turn to storm.

The father of Winter (Vetur) was called Vindsval, of Summer (Sumar), Svasud (Svasuðr). Both shall reign every year until the gods pass away. At the end of heaven

[1] That wolves follow the sun and moon, is a wide-spread popular superstition. In Swedish solvarg (sun-wolf) signifies a parhelion. Petersen. Nor. Myth. p. 76.

[2] Völuspá, Str. 32, 33.

sits the giant Hræsvelg, in an eagle's garb (arna ham)[1]. From the motion of his wings comes the wind which passes over men[2].

Thus the first created beings were Ymir and his race, the giants; next were the gods, who created heaven and earth; for not until these were in existence, and ready as places of abode for living beings, were the dwarfs and human race created[3].

The mighty gods, or Æsir[4], assembled on Ida's plain (Iðavöllr) in the middle of their city Asgard. There they first erected a court (hof), wherein were seats for all the twelve, and a high seat for All-father; also a lofty burgh or hall (havrgr) for the goddesses, called Vingolf. They then constructed a smithy, made hammers, tongs, anvils and, in fine, all other requisite implements. There they worked in metal, stone and wood, and so extensively in the metal called gold, that all their household gear was formed of it, whence that age was called the Golden Age. This lasted until it was corrupted by the women that came from Jötunheim, or the giants' world, as it is said[5]:—

The Æsir met
on Ida's plain,

[1] The Shetlanders of the present day are said by Scott, in his 'Pirate,' to adjure the wind under the form of an eagle.

[2] Gylf. 10, 11. Vafþrúdnism. Str. 12, 14, 22–27, 37. Grimnism. Str. 37, 38. Skaldsk. 58.

[3] Both giants and dwarfs shun the light. If surprised by the breaking forth of day, they become changed to stone. In the Alvismál, Ving-Thor amuses the dwarf Alvis with various questions till daylight, and then coolly says to him, "With great artifices, I tell thee, thou hast been deceived; thou art surprised here, dwarf! by daylight: the sun now shines in the hall." In the Helga Kviþa Hadinga Skaþa also, Atli says to the giantess (nicker) Hrîmgerd: "It is now day, Hrîmgerd! But Atli hath detained thee to thy life's perdition. It will appear a laughable harbour-mark, where thou standest as a stone-image." Sæmund's Edda, pp. 51, 115.

[4] Æsir, pl. of As.

[5] Völuspá, Str. 7, 8.

altars and temples
upraised high,
furnaces constructed,
forged precious things,
fashion'd tongs,
and fabricated tools.
At dice they played
in their dwelling joyful;
rich too they were
in ruddy gold,
until thither three
Thurs-maidens came
all-powerful
from Jötunheim.

Then the gods sitting on their thrones held counsel. They considered how the dwarfs had been quickened in the mould down in the earth, like maggots in a dead body[1]: for the dwarfs had been first created[2], and received life in the carcase of Ymir, and were then maggots; but now, by the decree of the gods, they received human understanding and human bodies, though they dwell in the earth and in stones[3]. Modsognir (Móðsognir) was the chief, the second Durin, as it is said in the Völuspá[4]:—"The holy gods deliberated who should create the race of dwarfs, from Ymir's blood and livid (blue) bones." The dwarfs of Lofar's race betook themselves from the Rocky Hall (Salar-Steinn) over the earth-field's regions (Aurvángur) to Jora's plains (Jó-

[1] For hold, *body, dead carcase,* some MSS. read bloði, *blood.*

[2] According to Snorri's Edda the dwarfs were created after mankind, while in the other Edda it is the reverse.

[3] In the German tales the dwarfs are described as deformed and diminutive, coarsely clad and of dusky hue: "a little black man;" "a little grey man." They are sometimes described of the height of a child of four years; sometimes as two spans high, a thumb high (hence Tom Thumb). The old Danish ballad of Eline af Villenskov mentions a 'trold' not bigger than an ant. Danske Viser, i. p. 176. Dvergmál (the speech of the dwarfs) is the Old Norse expression for the echo in the mountains. Grimm, D. M. p. 421.

[4] Str. 10.

ruvellir)[1]. Their several names bear allusion to the subordinate powers of nature in the mineral and vegetable kingdoms, and express the operating power which penetrates the soil, the veins of stone, the sap of plants; also the cold and heat, the light and the colours which are thereby produced[2].

Men came into existence when three mighty, benevolent gods, Odin, Hœnir and Lodur (Loður)[3], left the assembly to make an excursion. On the earth they found Ask and Embla (ash and elm ?), with little power and without destiny: spirit they had not, nor sense, nor blood, nor power of motion, nor fair colour. Odin gave them spirit (breath), Hœnir sense, Lodur blood and fair colour. Somewhat less circumstantially, though illustratively, it is related in Snorri's Edda, that Bör's sons (Odin, Vili and Ve) walking on the sea-shore found two trees, which they took up, and created men of them. The first gave them spirit and life; the second, understanding and power of motion; the third, aspect, speech, hearing and sight[4]. The man they called Ask, the woman Embla. From this pair the whole human race is descended, to whom a dwelling was assigned in Midgard.

Earth and Heaven.—The earth is flat and round; about it is the deep ocean. Outermost of all, around the shore, is the giants' abode, Jötunheim or Utgard,

[1] In the later popular belief the dwarfs are generally called the subterraneans, the brown men in the moor, etc. They make themselves invisible by a hat or hood. The women spin and weave, the men are smiths. In Norway rock-crystal is called dwarf-stone (dværgsten). Certain stones are in Denmark called dwarf-hammers (dværghamre). They borrow things and seek advice from people, and beg aid for their wives when in labour, all which services they reward. But they also lame cattle, are thievish and will carry off damsels. There have been instances of dwarf females having married and had children by men. Petersen, Nor. Myth. p. 109.

[2] Gylf. 14. Völuspá, Str. 7–16.

[3] Connected with Ger. lodern, *to flame, blaze.*

[4] Gylf. 9. Völuspá, Str. 15, 16.

against whose attacks the gods raised a bulwark within, around Midgard, formed of Ymir's eyebrows[1]. In the middle of the world, and on the highest spot, dwell the Æsir, in Asgard, where All-father Odin established rulers, who with himself should preside over the burgh and the destinies of men. There is the largest and noblest of all dwellings, Gladsheim (Glaðsheimr), and another, roofed with silver, called Valaskiálf, which Odin, in the beginning of time, curiously constructed, and from the throne in which (Hlidskiálf) he looks out over all worlds, and learns the doings of all creatures. "At the world's southern end there is a hall, the fairest of all and brighter than the sun, which is called Gimli. That will stand when both heaven and earth are past away, and good and upright men will inhabit that place to all eternity. It is, moreover, said that there is another heaven to the south, above this, which is called Andlang, and a third still higher called Vidblain (Viðbláinn), in which last we believe this hall to be; but we believe that only the Light Elves now inhabit those places." In another hall, as we have already seen, is the abode of the goddesses, which men call Vingolf. Between the giants and the gods flows the river Ifing, on which ice never comes. From Midgard to Asgard leads the bridge Bifröst (the quaking space), known to mortals as the rainbow: it has three colours. The most sacred place or seat of the gods is by the ash Yggdrasil, where they daily sit in judgement. Yggdrasil is the largest and best of trees; its branches spread themselves over the whole world, and tower up above the heavens. It has three roots which reach far and wide. Under one of them is the abode of Hel, the goddess of the dead; under the second dwell the frost-giants; under the third, human beings. Or, according to the prose Edda, the first root reaches to the Æsir; the second to the frost-giants, where was formerly Ginnunga-gap.

[1] See p. 4.

while the third stands over Niflheim, under which is Hvergelmir. This root is constantly gnawed from beneath by the serpent Nidhögg (Niðhöggr). Under the second root is Mimir's well, in which wisdom and genius are concealed. Mimir, the owner of the well, is full of wisdom, because he drinks every morning of the well from the horn Giöll (Giallar-horn). All-father once came, and craved a draught from the well, but got it not before he had given an eye as a pledge; whence it is said that Mimir drinks mead every morning from Valfather's pledge. Under the root which reaches to the Æsir's abode, is the sacred fountain of Urd (Urðr), where the gods sit in judgement. Every day the Æsir ride thither over Bifröst, which is likewise called the Æsir-bridge (Asbrú). The names of the Æsir's horses are as follow: Sleipnir, which is the best, and belongs to Odin, has eight legs, Glad (Glaðr), Gyllir, Gler, Skeidbrimir (Skeiðbrimir), Silfrintop (Silfrintoppr), Simir, Gils, Falhofnir, Gulltop (Gulltoppr), Lettfeti. Baldur's horse was burnt with him, and Thor walks to the meeting, and wades through the rivers Körmt and Örmt, and the two Kerlaugs, else the Æsir's bridge would be in a blaze, and the sacred water boil. By the well of Urd there stands, under the ash-tree, a fair hall, from which go three maidens, Urd, Verdandi, and Skulld[1] (past time, present time, and future time). They are called Norns (Nornir); they grave on the tablet (shield), determine the life, and fix the destiny of the children of men. But besides these there are other Norns, viz. those that are present at the birth of every child, to determine its destiny. These are of the race of the gods, while some others are of elf-race, and others of the dwarf-kin, or daughters of Dvalin. The good Norns and those of good descent allot good fortune; and when men fall into misfortunes, it is to be ascribed to the evil Norns. Mention occurs of the dogs of the Norns.

[1] Skulld the youngest of the Norns, is also a Valkyria. Gylf. 36.

In the branches of the tree Yggdrasil sits an eagle that knows many things. Between his eyes sits the hawk Vedurfölnir. The squirrel Ratatösk runs up and down the tree, and bears rancorous words between the eagle and the serpent Nidhögg. Four harts run among the boughs and bite its buds; their names are, Dain, Dvalin, Dunneyr and Durathror. In Hvergelmir, under Yggdrasil, there are so many serpents, besides Nidhögg, that no tongue may tell them, as it is said[1]:—

Yggdrasil's ash
evil suffers
more than men know of:
at the side it moulders,
a hart gnaws it above,
Nidhögg beneath tears it.
Under Yggdrasil lie
unnumber'd snakes,
more than mindless
men can conceive.

Those Norns that dwell by the well of Urd take water every day from the spring, which, with the mud that lies about it, they pour over the ash, that its branches may not rot and perish. This water is so sacred, that everything that enters it becomes as white as the film of an egg-shell, as it is said in the Völuspá:—

An ash I know
Yggdrasil named,
A branchy tree, bedew'd
With brightest water.
Thence come the dews
into the dales that fall:
ever stands it flourishing
o'er Urda's fountain.

The dew that falls from its branches on the earth is by men called honey-dew, and is the food of bees. Two birds

[1] Grimnismál, Str. 34, 35.

are fed in the well of Urd, called swans, and from them descend the birds of that species[1].

War.—"It was the first warfare in the world when they (men) pierced Gullveig through with a spear, and burned her in the High one's (Odin's) hall[2]. Thrice they burned her, thrice she was born anew: again and again, but she still lives. When she comes to a house, they call her Heidi (the bright, the welcome), and regard her as a propitious 'vala' or prophetess. She can tame wolves, understands witchcraft (seiðr), and delights wicked women. Hereupon the gods consulted together, whether they should punish this misdeed, or accept a blood-fine; when Odin cast forth a spear among the people (mankind), and now began war and slaughter in the world. The Æsir-burgh's defences were broken down. The Vanir anticipated war, and hastened over the field. The Valkyriur (choosers of those doomed to fall) came from afar, ready to ride to the gods' people: Skulld with the shield, Skögul, Gunn, Hild, Göndul, and Geir-Skögul. These were Odin's maidens, the Valkyriur, ready to ride over the earth[3], whom he sends to every battle-field, there to choose those that shall fall, and decide the victory. Surrounded by lightnings, with bloody corselets and radiant spears, they ride through the air and on the ocean. When their horses shake their manes, dew falls in the deep valleys and hail in the high forests[4]."

The Æsir and the Vanir made peace, and reciprocally gave hostages. The Vanir gave to the Æsir Niörd the Rich, whom the wise powers had created in Vanaheim,

[1] Gylf. 9, 14–17. Völuspá, Str. 19–22, 31. Vafþrúdnism. Str. 15, 16. Grimnism. Str. 6, 31–35. Fafnism. Str. 13. Hamþism. Str. 30.

[2] The world.

[3] Völuspá, Str. 24–28. I read the strophes in the following order: 26, 25, 27, 28, 24.—P.

[4] Gylf. 36. Helgakv. Hadinga Sk. 28. Helgakv. Hundb. 1, 15.

together with his children, Frey and Freyia. The Æsir, on their part, gave Hœnir, and sent him with Mimir, for whom in return they received Kvasir, the most prudent among the Vanir. Hœnir was raised to the chieftainship over the Vanir; but in all assemblies where good counsel was required, Mimir was obliged to whisper to Hœnir everything he should say; and in his absence, Hœnir constantly answered, "yes, consult now ye others." The Vanir hereupon, thinking themselves deceived, slew Mimir, and sent his head to the Æsir, which Odin so prepared with herbs and incantations, that it spoke to him, and told him many hidden things[1].

The Gods.—There are twelve principal Æsir, besides All-father (Al-föðr) or Odin, who has his own throne[2].

The highest among the gods is Odin[3]. He is called All-father, because he is the father of all, gods and men; also Valfather, because all the free that fall in battle belong to him. They are received into Valhall and Vingolf, and are called Einheriar[4]. But in the old Asgard he had twelve names, and has besides many others[5], every people having

[1] Ynglingas. c. 4. Gylf. 23. Valþrúdnism. Str. 39. Lokaglepsa, Str. 34, 35. Grimnism. Str. 50.

[2] Gylf. 14. 20.

[3] In Norway Thor was regarded as the principal deity. In the great temple at Upsala his image occupied the second place. (Might it not have been the centre?) Among the Swedes the worship of Frey seems chiefly to have been followed. The Danes, Gothlanders and Saxons appear to have been addicted to the worship of Odin (Woden). Grimm, D.M. p. 146. In the Sagas Thor is usually named before Odin. Ib. p. 147. Associated with Hár and Jafnhár, Odin appears under the denomination of Thrithi (Third). Snorra Edda, p. 3. In the Grimnismál he assigns to himself all the three names. Edda Sæm. p. 46.

[4] Gylf. 20. Bragaræður, 55. Hyndlulj. Str. 28. Asaheiti in Snorra-Edda, p. 211.

[5] His other names were Herran or Herian, Nikar or Hnikar, Nikuz or Hnikuð, Fiölnir, Oski, Omi, Biflíði or Biflindi, Sviðor, Sviþrir, Viþrir, Jalg or Jálkr. He is also called Drauga dróttin, *lord of spectres*. Ynglingas. c. 7.

given him a peculiar one[1]. In other words, his agency in heaven and earth is so great and manifold, that it is expressed by so many various names: as examples may be cited, Alda-gautr[2] and Alda-föðr, *creator* and *father of men*; Vera-týr, *god of men*; Val-föðr, *father of the slain*, because those that fell in battle came to him; Sig-föðr or Scier-föðr, *father of victory*; Herian, *devastator*; Sid-hat (Síð-höttr), *broad-hat*; Sid-skegg (Síð-skeggr), *ample-beard*; Hânga-gud, Hânga-týr, *god or lord of the hanged*, because the hanged were thought to belong to him[3]. Other names assumed by Odin are:—

1. *Gangrad* (Gangráðr, Gagnráðr), under which he paid a visit to the giant Vafthrudnir, the object and particulars of which form the subject of the eddaic poem, Vafþrudnismál, and are as follow:—

Odin imparts to his wife Frigg, that he is seized with a strong desire to visit the all-wise giant Vafthrudnir, for the purpose of contending with him in the wisdom of ancient times. Frigg endeavours to dissuade him from the journey, in the belief that no one is able to contend with Vafthrudnir. Odin then reminds her of his numerous wanderings and trials, and persists in his resolve to see the habitation of the giant; whereupon Frigg wishes him a pleasant journey and safe return, and prays that his sagacity may prove sufficient in his trial of words. Odin then departs, and arrives at the hall of the giant, in the guise of a traveller, and under the name of Gangrad. Here he greets the giant, and tells him the object of his coming. Vafthrudnir answers rather angrily, and gives him to un-

[1] Odin could change his form: his body would lie as dead or asleep, while he, as a bird or beast, fish or serpent, would in an instant pass into other lands. Ynglingas. c. 7.

[2] From alda (of men), and gauta (creator, caster), from gjota, gaut, *to cast* (*metal*). Prof. Munch, cited by Petersen.

[3] Connected probably with the myth of his having hung nine nights on a tree. Hrafn. Oðins.

derstand, that if he prove the less wise of the two, he shall not leave the hall alive. Odin then informs his antagonist that, after a long journey, he is come thirsty (after wisdom?) to his mansion, and in need of a good reception, whereupon the giant desires him to sit, and the contest begins. The giant then proposes that their contest shall be head for head, and all goes on smoothly, each answering the other's questions satisfactorily, until Gangrad asks what Odin whispered in the ear of Baldur before the latter was laid on the pile. Startled the giant now exclaims: "No one knows what thou, in the beginning of time, didst whisper to thy son. With death on my lips have I interpreted the wisdom of old and the fate of the gods; with Odin have I contended, with the wise speaker: ever art thou wisest of all!"

The questions are entirely of a cosmogonic or mythologic nature, as may be seen by the numerous quotations from the poem in the course of this section of the present work.

2. *Grimnir*. Why Odin assumed this appellation will be seen in the following story, being the prose introduction to the eddaic poem, Grimnismál.

"King Hrödung (Hröþungr) had two sons, one named Agnar, the other Geirröd (Geirröðr). Agnar was ten, and Geirröd eight years old. They once rowed out in a boat, with hook and line, to catch small fish, but the wind drove them out to sea. In the darkness of the night they were wrecked on the sea-shore, and went on land, where they met with a small farmer, with whom they passed the winter. The farmer's wife brought up Agnar, but the farmer himself took charge of Geirröd, and gave him good advice. In the spring the farmer gave them a vessel, and he and his wife accompanied them down to the shore, where the farmer had a long conversation alone with Geirröd. A favourable wind soon bore them to their father's dwelling.

Geirröd, who was foremost in the boat, sprang on shore, and pushed the boat out to sea, saying, 'Go hence in the power of the evil spirits' (smyl). He then went home to his paternal habitation, where he was received with welcome, and his father being dead, was made king, and attained to considerable reputation.

"Odin and Frigg were sitting in Hlidskialf, and looking over the whole world, when Odin said, 'Seest thou thy foster-son Agnar, how he passes his time in dalliance with a giantess in a cave, while Geirröd, my foster-son, is a king ruling over the land?' Frigg answered, 'He is so inhospitable, that he tortures his guests, when he thinks they are too numerous.' Odin said that this was the greatest of falsehoods. They then laid a wager, and Odin resolved on a visit to Geirröd. Frigg now sent her confidential attendant, Fulla, to Geirröd, to advise him to be on his guard, lest the wizard that had arrived in his country should cause his destruction, adding, as a token whereby to know him, that no dog, however fierce, would attack him. That King Geirröd was not hospitable, was mere idle talk, he nevertheless caused the man to be seized that the dogs would not assail. He was clad in a grey fur, and called himself Grimnir, but would give no further account of himself, although questioned. To extort a confession, the king had him tortured, by placing him between two fires, where he sat during eight days. Geirröd had a son of ten years, named Agnar after his uncle. This youth went to Grimnir and gave him a hornful of drink, saying that his father had acted unjustly in causing an innocent person to be tortured. The fire had by this time approached so near that Grimnir's fur was singed." He then sang the mytho-cosmogonic song called Grimnismál, in which he enumerates and describes the habitations of the twelve chief Æsir, of which further notice will be found hereafter. The remainder of the poem consists of mytho-

logical matter, the substance of which is to be found interspersed throughout the present work. The end of the story is as follows:—

"King Geirröd was sitting with his sword half-drawn across his knees, when he heard that it was Odin that was come, whereupon he rose for the purpose of removing him from the fire, when his sword slipt from his hand, in endeavouring to recover which, he fell forwards, and was pierced through with the weapon. Odin then vanished, and Agnar reigned in his father's stead."

3. *Vegtam* (viator indefessus).—Under this denomination Odin goes to consult the spirit of a 'vala' that lies buried near the gate of Hel's abode, respecting the fate of Baldur. The substance of this poem is given in the present work[1].

4. *Hár, Jafnhár, Thridhi* (High, Even-high, Third) under which denomination he appears in Snorri's Edda as a sort of northern trinity. In Grimnismál he assigns all these names to himself.

He was called *Hrafna-gud,* (the ravens' god), because he has two ravens, Hugin and Munin, which he sends forth over the wide world to get intelligence: when they return, they sit on his shoulders, and tell him all they have seen and heard. But he is anxious on account of Hugin, fearing he will not return, and still more so for Munin. As creator of heaven and earth, Odin rules and orders all things: he gives victory and riches, eloquence and understanding, the skaldic or poetic art, manliness and fair wind[2].

Odin's abode is, as we have said, named Gladsheim (Glaðsheimr), with its hall Valhall (Valhöll) radiant with

[1] There is a beautiful paraphrase of it by Gray, under the title of "The Descent of Odin."

[2] Gylf. 20, 38. Vegtamskv. Str. 6. Vafþrúdnism. Str. 1. Grimnism. Str. 20, 46–50, 54. Hyndlulj. Str. 2, 3.

gold, where he daily receives those that fall in arms. The hall's ceiling is formed of spears, it is roofed with shields, and the benches are strewed with coats of mail; before the west door hangs a wolf, and over him an eagle hovers. It is surrounded by a roaring river called Thund[1], and before it is a paling or lattice named Valgrind. It has five hundred and forty gates, through each of which eight hundred men can go abreast. Without the gates of Valhall is the wood Glasir, where the leaves are of red gold. They who from the battle-field come to Odin are called Einheriar, or chosen heroes; their occupation consists in arming themselves, in going out into the court, to fight with and slay each other; but at breakfast-time they ride home to Valhall, perfectly sound, drink beer with the Æsir, and recruit themselves with the flesh of the hog Sæhrimnir; for this hog, although boiled every day by the cook Andhrimnir, in the kettle Eldhrimnir, is whole again in the evening. The mead which they drink flows from the udder of the goat Heidrun (Heiþrún), that feeds on the leaves of the tree Lerad (Leraðr), which stands over Odin's hall. With this mead a drinking-vessel is filled of such capacity, that all the Einheriar have wherewith to satisfy themselves. Here they are waited upon by the Valkyriur, who present the mead and have charge of everything belonging to the table. The branches of the tree

[1] This interpretation I believe to be borne out by the context of Grimnismál, Str. 21, which has manifestly been misunderstood, viz.—

þytr þund,	*Thund roars,*	árstraumr þikir	*the strong streams seem*
unir þióðvitnis	*Thiodvitnir's fish*	ofer mikill	*over great*
fiskr flóði í	*plays in the river*	valglaumi at vaða	*for the band of the fallen to wade.*

þund, *the roaring* (like Odin's name þundr), I take for the name of the river that surrounds Valhall. Valglaumr, as Rask observes, is the company of 'valr,' or fallen, that have to pass over the river to come to Valhall. What is meant by Thiodvitnir's fish is unknown.—P.

Lerad are eaten also by the hart Eikthyrnir, from whose horns drops fall into Hvergelmir, of which many rivers are formed, some of which flow through the domains of the gods, others in the neighbourhood of men, and fall from thence to Hel. Odin takes no food, but gives that which is set before him at table to his wolves, Geri and Freki; Odin lives solely on wine. His attendant is his son Hermod (Hermóðr), whom he sends on his messages[1].

Thor, or Asa-Thor, a son of Odin and the earth (Fiörgvin, *the vivifying*; Hlódyn, *the warming*[2]), is the strongest of all the gods[3]. He rules over the realm of Thrudvang (Þrúðvángur) or Thrudheim (Þrúðheimr), and his mansion is named Bilskirnir, in which there are five hundred and forty floors. It is the largest house ever seen by men. He is also called Hlorridi (the Fire-driver or rider), Ving-

[1] Gylf. 20, 36, 38–41. Skáldskap. 34. Vafþrúdnism. Str. 41. Grimnism. Str. 8–10, 18, 19, 21–28, 36. Hrafnag. Oð. Str. 10. Hyndlulj. Str. 2.

[2] The goddess Hlódyn seems also to have been known to the Germans. Near Birten, on the Lower Rhine, the following inscription was found, now preserved at Bonn: Deæ Hludanæ sacrum C. Tiberius Verus. Thorlacius, with great probability (Antiq. Bor. Spec. iii.), identifies Hludana with the Hlódyn of the North, and certainly Hludana was neither a Roman nor a Celtic divinity; though Schreiber (Die Feen in Europa, p. 63) refers the name to the town of Lüddingen, not far from Birten. Grimm, D.M. p. 235. Müller, Altdeutsche Religion, p. 88.

[3] Thor is described sometimes as an old man, though usually as a tall, slender, comely young man with a red beard; on his head there is a crown of twelve stars (Steph. Notæ in Sax. p. 139). When he waxes wroth he blows in his red beard, and thunder resounds among the clouds. And St. Olaf the king—to whom, on the suppression of heathenism in the North, much of Thor's character was transferred by the missionaries, for the purpose, no doubt, of reconciling their converts to the new faith—is celebrated as resembling his prototype even to the hue of his beard, as we learn from the troll-wife's address to him, when he caused a rock, that had obstructed his course, to part in two:

> "Saint Olaf with thy beard so red,
> Why sailest thou through my cellar wall?"

Thor, &c., and sometimes Auku-Thor, Öku-Thor (Car-Thor), because he drives in a chariot with two he-goats, Tanngniost and Tanngrisnir. He is the constant enemy of the giants and trolls. He possesses three precious things, viz. 1. the hammer Miölnir, which the frost- and mountain-giants know but too well, when he swings it in the air; 2. his belt of power (Megingjarþar), when girded with which his strength is doubled; 3. his iron gloves, which he requires when he grasps the haft of Miölnir. As the jarls (men of rank, whence our *earls*) that fall in battle belong to Odin, in like manner Thor has the race of thralls. Thor's sons are Magni and Modi (Móþi). By his wife Sif he has a daughter named Thrud (Þrúðr). He is foster-father to Vingnir and Hlora. On his travels he is attended by Thialfi and Röskva[1].

Baldur is Odin's second son (by Frigg); he is the best and is praised by all. He is so fair of aspect, and so bright, that light issues from him; and there is a plant, that of all plants is the whitest, which is compared to Baldur's brow[2]. Hence an idea may be formed of his beauty both of hair and person. He is the wisest, and most eloquent,

[1] Gylf. 21. Voluspá, Str. 56. Lokaglepsa, Str. 55, 57, 58. Hamarsh. Str. 1, 9. Grimnism. Str. 4, 24. Harbarðslj. Str. 24, 54. Alvism. Str. 6. Hyndlulj. Str. 40. Skaldskap. 4, 21. and p. 211.

The aconite (wolfsbane, monkshood) is in Norway called Thorhjalm (Thori galea), Thorhat (Thori pileus); Swed. Dan. stormhat. May not its denomination of wolfsbane bear allusion to Thor's combat with the wolf? It is also called Tyrihjalm (Tyris galea). See Grimm, D. M. p. 1145.

[2] In Denmark, Baldur's brow is the *anthemis cotula*; in Iceland, the *matricaria maritima inodora*; in Sweden, a plant called *hvitatoja* (white eye) or *hvitapiga* (white lass). In Skania, the *anthemis cotula* bears the name of *balsensbro*. On the right hand side of the road leading from Copenhagen to Roeskilde there is a well called Baldur's Brönd, which he is said to have opened after a battle with Hödur, to refresh his men suffering from heat and fatigue. The tradition among the country-people is, that it was produced by a stroke of the hoof of Baldur's horse. See Saxo, p. 120, and Bp. Müller's note; also Thiele, Danske Folkesagn, i. 5.

and most amiable of the Æsir, and is so gifted by nature that no one may pervert his judgements. His abode is in heaven, in the place called Breidablik, into which nothing impure may enter[1].

[1] Gylf. 22. A short poem, in Old High German, of the ninth or tenth century, discovered a few years since at Merseburg by Dr. Waitz, and published by Dr. J. Grimm, has for subject the horse of Phol, whom Grimm, with great probability, takes to be identical with Baldur. As the anecdote it contains does not appear in either Edda, though the tradition, as will presently be seen, has been, and probably still is, current not only in the North and the Netherlands, but also in this island, I do not hesitate in giving the entire poem together with its more modern paraphrases.

Phol endi Wôdan	Phol and Woden
vuorun zi holza :	went to the wood ;
du wart demo Balderes volon	then was of Balder's colt
sîn vuoz birenkit ;	his foot wrenched ;
thu biguolen Sinthgunt,	then Sinthgunt charm'd it,
Sunnâ era suister ;	*and* Sunna her sister ;
thu biguolen Frûâ,	then Frua charm'd it,
Vollâ era suister ;	*and* Volla her sister ;
thu biguolen Wôdan,	then Woden charm'd it,
so he wola conda,	as he well could,
sôse bênrenki,	as well the bone-wrench,
sôse bluotrenki,	as the blood-wrench,
sôse lidirenki ;	as the joint-wrench ;
* * *	* * *
bên zi bêna,	bone to bone,
bluot zi bluoda,	blood to blood,
lid zi geliden,	joint to joint,
sôse gelîmida sîn.	as if they were glued together.

Under the following christianized form it appears in Norway :—

Jesus reed sig til Heede,	Jesus rode to the heath,
der reed han syndt (sönder) sit Folebeen.	There he rode the leg of his colt in two.
Jesus stigede af og lægte det ;	Jesus dismounted and heal'd it ;
Jesus lagde Marv i Marv,	Jesus laid marrow to marrow,
Ben i Ben, Kjöd i Kjöd ;	Bone to bone, flesh to flesh ;
Jesus lagde derpaa et Blad,	Jesus laid thereon a leaf,
At det skulde blive i samme stad.	That it might remain in the same place.

In Asbjörnsen's Norske Huldreeventyr (i. 45) an old Norwegian crone

The third Æs is Niörd (Njörþr). He dwells in Noatun. He rules the course of the wind, stills the ocean, and quenches fire. He is invoked by sea-farers and fishermen, and is the patron of temples and altars[1]. He is so rich that he can give wealth and superfluity to those that in-

applies the veterinary remedy to a young man's sprained ankle, in the following formula muttered over a glass of brandy :—

Jeg red mig engang igjennem et Led,	I once was riding through a gate,
Saa fik min sorte Fole Vred ;	When my black colt got a sprain ;
Saa satte jeg Kjöd mod Kjöd og Blod mod Blod,	So I set flesh to flesh and blood to blood,
Saa blev min sorte Fole god.	So my black colt got well.

From Norway the horse-remedy most probably found its way to Shetland, where, " when a person has received a sprain, it is customary to apply to an individual practised in casting the 'wresting thread.' This is a thread spun from black wool, on which are cast nine knots, and tied round a sprained leg or arm. During the time the operator is putting the thread round the affected limb, he says, but in such a tone of voice as not to be heard by the bystanders, nor even by the person operated upon :—

" The Lord rade,	" Set joint to joint,
And the foal slade ;	Bone to bone,
He lighted,	And sinew to sinew.
And he righted ;	Heal in the Holy Ghost's name ! "

In Sweden against the horse distemper, 'flog,' we find

Oden står på borget,	Odin stands on the mountain,
han spörger efter sin fole,	He inquires after his colt,
floget har han fått.	He has got the 'flog.'
Spotta i din hand och i hans mun,	Spit in thy hand and eke in his mouth,
han skall få bot i samma stund.	He shall be cured in the same hour.

See Jacob Grimm, Ueber zwei entdeckte Gedichte aus der Zeit des Deutschen Heidenthums, Berlin, 1842, 4to ; and Deutsche Mythologie, p. 1181 ; also Popular Rhymes, &c. of Scotland, by Robert Chambers, p. 37, Edinb. 1842. A similar formula is known in the Netherlands, but which Grimm was unable to give. An attempt by the present editor to procure it from Belgium has, he regrets to say, also proved unsuccessful.

[1] Vafþrúdnism. 38.

voke him[1]. Niörd, as we have already said, was born and bred in Vanaheim[2].

Frey (Freyr), a son of Niörd and his sister[3], was also bred in Vanaheim. He is beloved of all, and is one of the most renowned of the Æsir. He presides over rain, and sunshine, and the fruits of the earth. He is to be invoked for good seasons and peace. He also presides over the wealth of men. He is the god of the year, and giver of cattle, and loosens the bonds of the captive[4]. In the beginning of time, Álfheim was given to him by the gods as tooth-money. He reigns over the Light-elves (Liósálfar), who are more beauteous than the sun, while the Black or Dark-elves (Döckálfar), who are blacker than pitch, dwell in the bowels of the earth[5]. He is the foe

[1] Gylf. 23. Grimnism. Str. 16. Skáldskap. 6.

[2] An aquatic plant (spongia marina) bears his name, viz. Niarðar vöttr (Niörd's glove), which is also consecrated both to Freyia and the Virgin Mary. This plant, as well as some kinds of orchis, in consequence of the hand-shaped form of their roots, are called Mary's hand, our Lady's hand, God's hand (Dan. Gudshaand). Grimm, D. M. p. 198.

[3] Adam of Bremen (De Situ Daniæ), who calls him Fricco, thus speaks of the worship of Frey in Upsala: "Fricco, pacem voluptatemque largiens mortalibus; cujus etiam simulacrum fingunt ingenti priapo; si nuptiæ celebrandæ sunt, immolant Fricconi."

[4] Lokaglepsa, 37.

[5] The Elves (Alfar) of later times seem a sort of middle being between the Light and Dark Elves. They are fair and lively, but also bad and mischievous. In some parts of Norway the peasants describe them as diminutive, naked boys with hats on. Traces of their dance are sometimes to be seen on the wet grass, especially on the banks of rivers. Their exhalation is injurious, and is called *álfyust* or *álfblæst*, causing a swelling, which is easily contracted by too nearly approaching places where they have spat, &c. They have a predilection for certain spots, but particularly for large trees, which on that account the owners do not venture to meddle with, but look on them as something sacred, on which the weal or woe of the place depends. Certain diseases among their cattle are attributed to the Alfs, and are, therefore, called alf-ild (elf fire) or alfskud (elf-shot). The Dark Elves (Döck alfar) are often confounded with the Dwarfs, with whom they indeed seem identical, though they are distinguished in Odin's Ravens' Song. The Norwegians also make a distinction between

and slayer of Beli; is owner of the ship Skidbladnir, and rides in a chariot drawn by the hog Gullinbursti (Gold-

Dwarfs and Alfs, believing the former to live solitary and in quiet, while the latter love music and dancing. Faye, p. 48.

The fairies (elves) of Scotland are precisely identical with the above. They are described as "a diminutive race of beings, of a mixed or rather dubious nature, capricious in their dispositions, and mischievous in their resentment. They inhabit the interior of green hills, chiefly those of a conical form, in Gælic termed *Sighan*, on which they lead their dances by moonlight; impressing upon the surface the marks of circles, which sometimes appear yellow and blasted, sometimes of a deep green hue; and within which it is dangerous to sleep, or to be found after sunset. Cattle, which are suddenly seized with the cramp, or some similar disorder, are said to be *elf-shot*." Scott's Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, ii. 162, edit. 1821.

Of the Swedish elves, Arndt gives us the following sketch:—"Of giants and dwarfs, of the alp, of dragons that keep watch over treasures, they have the usual stories; nor are the kindly elves forgotten. How often has my postillion, when he observed a circular mark in the dewy grass, exclaimed: 'See! there the elves have been dancing!' These elf-dances play a great part in the spinning room. To those who at midnight happen to enter one of these circles, the elves become visible, and may then play all kinds of pranks with them; though, in general, they are little, merry, harmless beings, both male and female. They often sit in small stones that are hollowed out in a circular form, and which are called älfquarnar (elf-querns or -millstones). Their voice is said to be soft like the air. If a loud cry is heard in the forest, it is that of the Skogsrä (see vol. ii.), or spirit of the wood, which should be answered only by a 'He!' when it can do no harm." Reise durch Schweden, iii. 16.

The elf-shot was known in this country in very remote times, as appears from the Anglo-Saxon incantation printed in Grimm, D. M. 1192 and in the Appendix to Kemble's Saxons in England (i. 530, *sq.*):—"Gif hit wǽre ésagescot, oððe hit wǽre ylfa gescot." *If it were an æsir-shot or an elve's-shot.* On this subject Grimm says: "It is a very old belief, that dangerous arrows were shot by the elves from the air.....The thunderbolt is also called *elf-shot*, and in Scotland, a hard, sharp, wedge-shaped stone is known by the name of *elf-arrow, elf-flint, elf-bolt*, which it is supposed has been sent by the spirits." D. M. 429. See also the old Danish ballad 'Elveskud,' in which the elf-king's daughter strikes Sir Oluf between the shoulders, and causes his death. Danske Viser, i. 237; or the Engl. transl. in Jameson's Ballads, i. 219.

The wives of the elves are called 'elliser.' They are to be seen only in fine weather, and then in the "elf-marshes," particularly in spots where

bristle), or Slidrugtanni[1]. Frey's attendant is named Skirnir; he has also Beyggvir and his wife Beyla in his service[2]. The Swedes were chiefly devoted to his worship[3].

Here may also be noticed the three sons of Forniot (the old Jute), viz. Œgir or Hler[4] (Hlèr), the god of the ocean; Logi[5] (flame or fire), and Kari (wind). Œgir's wife is Rân; they have nine daughters, whose names denote waves. His servants were Finnafeng (dextre, celeriter acquirens), who was slain by Loki, and Eldir. Rân takes in

some one has met his death in an unfortunate manner. They sometimes scatter the hay about, sometimes dance. In front they appear as beautiful women, but behind are deformed and ugly; or, as they are described, "as hollow as a dough-trough." Thiele, i. 22, 167, edit. 1820; ii. 213, edit. 1843.

The hole in wood, where a knot has been, is called in Scotland an *elf-bore*. A similar superstition prevails in Denmark and Norway.

From Afzelius we learn that elf-altars still exist in Sweden, at which offerings are made for the sick. The elves are slender and delicate; the young females are particularly beautiful. When, on a summer evening, the wanderer lies down to rest by an elf-mound (älfwehög) he hears the tones of their harp and their lively song. When an elf damsel wishes to unite herself with the human race, she flies with the sunbeam through some opening, as a knot-hole in the wainscot, etc. etc. Sago-Häfder, ii. 150, 155.

[1] In the North a hog was offered to Frey as a sacrifice of atonement; and in Sweden, until comparatively recent times, cakes in the form of a hog were baked every Christmas eve. Grimm, p. 45. In Denmark, even to the present day, the lower classes have roast pork for dinner on that day.

[2] Gylf. 17, 24, 49. p. 66. Skáldskap. 7. Grimnism. Str. 5. Skirnisför. Lokaglepsa, Introd. Str. 36, 37, 44–46, 52, 56.

[3] See some further remarks on the worship of Frey in Kemble's Saxons in England, i. 355.

[4] Oegir and Hler were, no doubt, anciently considered as two, the former ruling over the stormy, the latter over the tranquil ocean. In Saxo also (p. 81) we find two dukes in Jutland, Eyr and Ler.

[5] On account of his lofty stature, Logi was called Hälogi (High Logi). From him the most northern part of Norway has its name of Hálogaland, or Helgeland. He was father to Thorgerd Hölgabrud and Yrpa, concerning whom see hereafter.

her net those that perish at sea[1]. These divinities seem to have belonged to an older mythology, most probably that of the Fins[2].

Tŷ, or Týr, is the boldest and stoutest of the Æsir. It is he who gives victory in war, and should be invoked by warriors. It is a proverbial saying, that a man who surpasses others in valour is as bold as Tŷ. He is also so wise, that it is usual to say of a very sagacious man, he is as wise as Tŷ. He is, however, not considered as a settler of quarrels among people. Odin is his father[3], but on his mother's side he is of giant race[4].

Bragi is another of the Æsir. He is famed for wisdom and eloquence, and is profoundly skilled in the art of poetry, which from him is denominated bragr, and those who distinguish themselves above others in eloquence are called bragr-men, and bragr-women. He is upbraided by Loki for not being sufficiently warlike and doughty in battle. He has a long beard, and is a son of Odin[5].

Heimdall, though regarded as a Van, is nevertheless called a son of Odin. He is also called the White or Bright God, and is a great and holy god. In the beginning of time he was born, on the boundary of the earth, of nine giant maidens, who were sisters, and was nourished with the strength of the earth, and the cold sea. The nine maidens were named, Gialp, Greip, Elgia, Angeia, Ulfrun, Aurgiafa, Sindur, Atla, and Jarnsaxa. He drinks

[1] Lokaglepsa, Introd. Skáldskap, 25, 27, 33, 61. Hrafnag. Oð. Str. 17. Hversu Noregr bygðist, c. 1.

[2] Forniot was known to the Anglo-Saxons, as appears from the name given by them to a plant: Forneotes folme (Forniot's hand).

[3] In the Hymiskviða he speaks of himself as a son of the giant Hymir. See hereafter.

[4] Gylf. 25. Skáldskap, 9. Hymiskv. Str. 4, 5, 7, 8, 10. The daphne mezereon (spurge laurel) bears his name—Týviðr (Dan Tysved). Th viola Martis is in Scotland called Týsfiola.

[5] Gylf. 26. Skáldskap. 10. Grimnism. Str. 44. Lokaglepsa, Str. 13.

mead in his bright hall, Himinbiörg, by Bifröst, at the bridge head (brúarsporðr), where the rainbow reaches heaven. There he sits, as the watchman of the gods, at the end of heaven, to guard the bridge from the mountain-giants, where he is often wetted through with rain, or, as Loki expresses it, gets a wet back. He needs less sleep than a bird, hears the grass grow on the ground and the wool on the sheep, and sees, as well by night as by day, for a hundred miles around him. His horn Giöll (Giallar-horn) is hidden under the sacred tree Yggdrasil; but when he blows it, its sound is heard through all worlds. Heimdall's horse is named Gulltopp (Gold-mane). He is himself also called Hallinskeidi (Descending), and Gullintanni (Golden-tooth), because his teeth are of gold. The head is called Heimdall's sword, because he was pierced through with a man's head[1]. He contended with Loki for the Brisinga-men, Freyia's ornament[2].

Höd (Hödur) is another of the Æsir, and is said to be a son of Odin. He is blind, but exceedingly strong. The gods may well wish never to hear his name pronounced, for his deed[3] will be long remembered both by gods and men.

Vidar is called the silent god. He is the son of Odin and the giantess Grid (Gríðr). He has a very thick shoe, that has been forming, from the beginning of time, of the thin shreds that are cut from shoes in shaping the toes or heels: therefore should every one cast away such shreds, who cares about rendering aid to the Æsir[4]. In other places mention is made of his *iron* shoes, and in the Skálda he is called eiganda iarnskoss (owner of the iron shoe):

[1] Skáldskap. 8. The myth to which this refers is lost.

[2] Gylf. 17, 27. Völuspá, Str. 31. Grimnism. Str. 13. Hamarsh. Str. 17. Lokaglepsa, Str. 48. Hyndlulj. Str. 31–36. Hrafnag. OÐ. Str. 26. Skáldskap. 8, 16, 69.

[3] His slaying of Baldur. Gylf. 28. Skáldskap. 13.

[4] The reason will appear hereafter.

he is the strongest of the gods after Thor, and affords them aid in many difficulties. His abode, Landvidi (Landviþi), is thickly overgrown with brushwood and high grass[1].

Vali is a son of Odin and Rind. He is stout in battle, and an excellent archer[2].

Ull (Ullr) is the son of Sif and stepson of Thor. He is a good archer, and runs so rapidly on snow-shoes, that no one is a match for him. He is comely of aspect, and warlike in habit and manners. It is good to invoke him in single combats. His dwelling is Ydal (Ydalir)[3].

Forseti, a son of Baldur and Nanna[4], Nef's (Nep's) daughter, dwells in the heavenly mansion called Glitnir, which is supported on gold, and roofed with silver. He settles all quarrels, and neither gods nor men know any better judgements than his[5].

Loki (Asa-Loki or Lopt) is reckoned among the Æsir, and is styled the traducer of the gods, and a scandal to gods and men. His father is the giant Farbauti; his mother is Laufey (leafy-isle), or Nál (needle), and his brothers are Byleist and Helblindi[6]. He is comely of

[1] Gylf. 29, 51. Grimnism. Str. 17. Skáldskap. 11, 18, p. 113.

[2] Gylf. 30. Skáldskap. 12.

[3] Gylf. 31. Skáldskap. 11. Grimnism. Str. 5, 42. Vegtamskv. Str. 3.

[4] The inhabitants of Heligoland were especially devoted to the worship of Forseti, from whom the isle itself bore the name of Fosetisland, *i. e.* Forseti's land. It was held so sacred by the natives, and by mariners and pirates, that no one dared to touch any animal that grazed on it, nor even to draw water from the well unless in silence. Hence no doubt its appellation of Heilig (holy) land. Alcuin, in his Vita S. Willibrordi, gives an interesting account of the saint's actions on the isle, on which he had been cast by a storm. The entire extract, as well as another from Adam of Bremen, 'De Situ Daniæ,' may be seen in Grimm, D. M. pp. 210, 211.]

[5] Gylf. 32. Grimnism. Str. 15.

[6] In Jutland the plant *polytrichum commune* is called *Loki's oats.* When there is a certain trembling or waving motion in the air, which bewilders and dazzles the sight, the Jutish peasants say that *Loki is sowing his oats.*—Blicher's Noveller, v. p. 77. Another plant, the *rhinanthus crista galli*, or yellow rattle, is called Loki's purse. In the middle age, the

aspect, but evil-minded, and very capricious. He is distinguished above others for guile and artifice, and has often brought the Æsir into perilous plights, from which however he has extricated them by his cunning. His wife is named Sigyn, and their sons Nari or Narvi, and Vali or Ali. But Loki has also other children by Angurboda, a giantess from Jötunheim, viz. the Wolf Fenrir, the Jormungand or Midgard's Serpent, and Hel, the goddess of the dead. In the beginning of time, Odin and Loki were foster-brothers; they had mingled blood together, on which account Odin would never hold a feast unless Loki were present. But Loki was afterwards, for eight years, down on earth, in the form of a cow, and as a woman, and there bore children. Burnt up in his innermost sense (seared up in mind), Loki found a half-burnt heart of a woman; then he became false and wicked, and thence came all unhappiness on earth [1].

We meet also with the names of Meili, a son of Odin and brother of Thor; Nep or Nef (Nepr, Nefir), a son of Odin, and father of Nanna; also Hildolf, a son of Odin [2].

The Goddesses.—The chief goddess is Frigg [3], the wife of Odin. From them descend the race of Æsir [4]. Her

idea of the devil was applied to Loki, who sows weeds among the good seed. In the Thellemark in Norway he once took a child on his back, and on setting it down, said, "So shalt thou sit till thou art a year old." Whence it comes that children have a hollow on each side of the hip, and cannot walk before the expiration of a year. When the fire makes a whining noise, it is said that Lokje (Loki) is beating his children.—Faye, Norske Sagn, p. 6. In Iceland the fiery, sulphureous ignis fatuus is called Lokabrenna (Lokii incendium). Loka daun is the Icelandic name of a fiery vapour. Grimm, D. M. pp. 221, 868.

[1] Gylf. 33, 34. Skáldskap. 16. Lokaglepsa, Str. 6, 9, 23. Hyndluli. Str. 38.

[2] Harbarðslj. Str. 8, 9.

[3] Whether the sixth day of the week is named after her, or after the goddess Freyia, is very doubtful.

[4] Gylf. 9. Skáldskap. p. 211.

habitation is Fensalir. She knows the destiny of men, although she is silent thereon. During Odin's absence, she married his brothers Vili and Ve[1]. She is called Fiörgyn's daughter, Nanna's stepmother, Earth's, and Rind's and Gunnlöd's, and Gerd's rival. She possesses a feather-garb, or falcon's plumage[2]. She is the goddess of marriage.

In equal veneration is FREYIA held, the daughter of Niörd and sister of Frey. From her descent she is called Vana-dis, or goddess of the Vanir. She dwells in Folkvang, her hall is called Sessrymnir (roomy-seated); and when she rides to battle, one half of the slain belong to her, the other to Odin; hence her appellation of Valfreyia. She delights in love songs, and is to be prayed to in love matters. When she rides, her chariot is drawn by two cats. She owns the ornament called Brising, or Brisinga-men[3].

[1] The story is thus told by Snorri. "Odin had two brothers, one named Ve the other Vilir. and these governed the realm in his absence. Once, when Odin had travelled far away, and had been so long absent that the Æsir despaired of his return, his brothers took on themselves to divide his possessions; but of his wife, Frigg, they both took possession. Odin, however, returning shortly after, took back his wife."—Ynglinga-saga, 3. For this unlucky affair she was afterwards jeeringly reproached by Loki: "Þegi þú, Frigg! þú ert Fjörgyns mær, ok hefir æ vergjörn verið; er þá Vé'a oc Vilja léztu þér Viþris kvæn! báþa í baþm um-tekit." —Lokaglepsa, 26. Saxo (p. 42) tells sad tales of Frigg, how she stripped her husband's statue of its gold, and demolished it, how she violated her conjugal fidelity, till Odin, provoked by the twofold injury, went into voluntary exile.

[2] Gylf. 20, 35. Skáldskap. 19. Lokaglepsa, Str. 26, 29. Ynglingas. c. 3.

[3] In the Saga Olafs Tryggvasonar, vol. ii. c. 17, ed. Skalholt (and reprinted in Rask's edit. of Snorra Edda, p. 354) there is rather an awkward story of the manner in which Freyia became possessed of her ornament. Freyia, we are there told, was a mistress of Odin. Not far from the palace dwelt four dwarfs, whose names were Alfrig, Dvalin, Berling and Grer: they were skilful smiths. Looking one day into their stony dwelling, Freyia saw them at work on a beautiful golden necklace or collar, which she offered to buy, but which they refused to part with, except on conditions quite incompatible with the fidelity she owed to Odin, but to which she,

Like Frigg, she possesses a falcon's plumage, and, like Frey, a hog named Gullinbursti, or Hildisvini (the swine of war), which the dwarfs Dain and Nabbi made for her, and whose golden bristles illumine the thickest darkness. After her name women of condition are called Fru (*Dan.* Frue, *Ger.* Frau). Freyia was married to Od (Oðr), and they had a daughter named Hnos, after whose name all precious things are called *hnosir*. Od forsook her, and went far away: she weeps for his absence, and her tears are red gold. She travelled among unknown people in search of him [1]. Freyia has many names, because she

nevertheless, was tempted to accede. Thus the ornament became hers. By some means this transaction came to the knowledge of Loki, who told it to Odin. Odin commanded him to get possession of the ornament. This was no easy task, for no one could enter Freyia's bower without her consent. He went away whimpering, but most were glad on seeing him in such tribulation. When he came to the locked bower he could nowhere find an entrance, and it being cold weather he began to shiver. He then transformed himself to a fly, and tried every opening, but in vain; there was nowhere air enough to enable him to get through (Loki requires air). At length he found a hole in the roof, but not bigger than the prick of a needle: through this he slipt. On his entrance he looked around to see if any one were awake, but all were buried in sleep. He peeped in at Freyia's bed, and saw that she had the ornament round her neck, but that the lock was on the side she lay on. He then transformed himself to a flea, placed himself on Freyia's cheek, and stung her so that she woke, but only turned herself round and slept again. He then laid aside his assumed form (ham), cautiously took the ornament, unlocked the bower, and took his prize to Odin. In the morning, on waking, Freyia seeing the door open without having been forced, and that her ornament is gone, instantly understands the whole affair. Having dressed herself she repairs to Odin's hall, and upbraids him with having stolen her ornament, and insists on its restoration, which she finally obtains.

This story, though probably based on some lost poem, is subsequent to the time of Christianity and of little value. Compare the Brisinga-men of Freyia with the ὅρμος and κεστὸς of Venus. In Beowulf (v. 2394. *sq.*) allusion is made to the "Brósinga-men," as belonging to Hermanric, but the legend concerning it is no longer extant. See Kemble's edition, vol. ii. Appendix.

[1] Some traces of the myth of Freyia (under the name of Syr) and Od

assumed a new one among each people that she visited in her journeyings: hence she is called Mardöll, Hörn, Gefn, and Syr[1].

Of Nanna, the wife of Baldur, mention will be made hereafter.

Idun (Iþunn, Iþúðr), the wife of Bragi, and daughter of Ivald, keeps in her casket the apples of which the gods must eat, when they begin to grow old: they then again become young; and this process will continue till the destruction of the gods, or Ragnaröck. Her dwelling is in Brunnakr[2].

Sif, Thor's wife, mother of Ull and Thrud, has a noble head of hair[3]. Loki says there is but one who had unlawful intercourse with her, and that was the wily Loki[4].

Saga dwells in Söckquabeck, over which the cool waves murmur. There she and Odin joyful drink each day from golden cups[5].

Gefion[6] is a virgin, and is served by those that die vir-

are to be found in the story of Syritha and Othar, given by Saxo (p. 330, *sq.*), though in almost every particular widely differing from the little that has been transmitted to us of that myth. The flower Freyju hâr (*supercilium Veneris*) owes its northern appellation to the goddess.

[1] Gylf. 24, 35, 49, p. 66. Grimnism. Str. 14. Hyndlulj. Str. 7. Hamarsh. Str. 3.

[2] Gylf. 26. Hrafnag. Oð. Str. 6. Skáldskap. p. 121.

[3] See more about Sif's hair at p. 38. A plant (*polytrichum aureum*) bears the name of Sifjar haddr (Sifæ peplum).

[4] Skáldskap. 21. Lokaglepsa, Str. 54.

[5] Gylf. 35. Grimnism. Str. 7.

[6] Of Gefion, and the obligation under which the Danes lie to her, there is the following tradition. A king named Gylfi once reigned over the lands now called Sweden. Of him it is related that he gave a wandering woman, who had diverted him by her song, as much land as four oxen could plough in a day and a night. *This woman was of the race of the Æsir*, and named Gefiun. She took four oxen from the north, from Jötunheim, who were her own sons by a Jötun, and set them before the plough, which penetrated so deeply that it loosened a part of the land, which the oxen drew out to sea westwards, until they stopt in a certain sound, where Gefiun fixed the land, and gave it the name of Sælund. Where the land

gins. She knows the decrees of fate as well as Odin himself. Loki upbraids her with being infatuated with the fair youth that gave her a necklace, and with yielding to his embraces [1].

Eir is the best leech. Fulla is a maiden with dishevelled hair and a golden band round her head [2]. She bears Frigg's casket, has charge of her foot-covering, and knows her secret council. Gna rides through the air and over the sea, on Frigg's messages, on the horse Hofvarpnir. Once, as she was riding, some Vanir saw her in the air, one of whom said,

> What flies there?
> what goes there?
> or is borne in air?

She answered,

> I fly not,
> though I go,
> and am borne in air,
> on Hôfvarpnir,
> that Hamskerpir
> got by Gardarôfa.

Hlin guards those whom Frigg is desirous of freeing from peril. Siöfn inclines the mind of both sexes to love: from her name a lover is called *siafni*. Lofn is kind and good to those that invoke her: she has permission from All-father or Frigg to unite those who love each other, whatever hindrances or difficulties may stand in the way. From her name is derived the word lof (praise, leave), because she is greatly praised by men. Vör hears the oaths and vows of lovers, and punishes those who break them. She

was ploughed up a lake formed itself, called in Sweden Laugr, now the Mälar lake. And the bays and creeks in the lake correspond to the promontories of Seeland.—Snorra Edda, p. 1. Thiele, Danske Folksagn, i. 1. The above is not contained in the Upsala MS. of Snorri's Edda, which is the oldest copy known.

[1] Gylf. 35. Lokaglepsa, Str. 20, 21.

[2] Höfuðband Fullu (Fulla's head-band) is a periphrasis for gold.

is wise, and hears of everything, so that nothing can be hidden from her. Syn guards the door of the hall, and locks it against those that may not enter. She is appointed as the defender in courts of those causes which it is endeavoured to defeat by falsehood. Snotra is sagacious and of elegant manners. From her name a man or woman of sagacity is said to be *snotr*. Sôl and Bil[1] are also reckoned among the goddesses; also Earth, the mother of Thor, and Rind, the mother of Vali[2].

Of Odin's Horse Sleipnir.—Odin had a horse named Sleipnir, that was the most excellent of horses. The following account is given of his origin. In the beginning of time, when the gods had founded Midgard and Valhall, there came a builder from Jötunheim, who promised to construct for them, in three half-years, so strong a fastness, that neither the mountain-giants nor the frost-giants should be able to take it, even though they were to come over Midgard, if in recompense they would give him Freyia together with the sun and moon. The gods acquiesced in his demand, provided he completed the work in one winter; but if on the first day of summer aught were wanting, or if he availed himself of any one's assistance, the bargain should be void. The builder hereupon prayed that he might be allowed to use his horse Svadilföri (Svaþilföri), to which the Æsir, by the advice of Loki, assented. He began his work on the first day of winter, and during the night his horse dragged the stones. The Æsir were amazed at the immense size of the stones brought by the horse, which performed more work by half than the builder himself; but there were witnesses to the bargain, and many oaths taken; for the giant would not have deemed it safe to be among the Æsir without such security, especially if Thor should return, who was then absent in the eastern parts, on an expedition against the

[1] See page 6. [2] Gylf. 35, 36.

trolls (demons). When the winter drew near to a close, the fortification was far advanced, and was so high and strong that it was secure from assault. When three days only were wanting to summer, the gateway was all that remained to be completed. Hereupon the gods assembled, and deliberated, and inquired whence the counsel came, to give Freyia in marriage in Jötunheim, and spoil air and heaven by taking away the sun and moon and giving them to a giant. It was agreed that such advice could come from no one but Loki, the son of Laufey, the author of so much mischief, whom they accordingly threatened with an ignominious death, if he did not devise some means of annulling the contract. Loki was now terrified, and swore that the builder should get no payment. In the evening, when the latter was gone with his horse to fetch stones, a mare came running out of the wood to the horse, and neighed: the horse hereupon became restive, broke his rein, and ran after the mare into the wood, and the giant after the horse; and they ran during the whole night. When the builder saw that the work could not be finished in the time, he assumed his giant mood; but when the Æsir found that he was a mountain-giant, they, regardless of their oaths, called Thor to their aid, who raising his hammer Miölnir, paid him therewith, instead of the sun and moon, not even allowing him to return and build in Jötunheim; for at the first blow he crushed the giant's skull, and sent him to Niflheim. Loki, in his guise of a mare, had conceived by Svadilföri, and sometime after brought forth a gray colt with eight legs[1]: that was Sleipnir, Odin's horse, on which he rides over land and sea[2].

[1] In Inga Barðar's Saga, c. 20, Sleipnir has four legs only. Runes were inscribed on his teeth or rein. Brynh. Kv. i. 15.

[2] Gylf. 42. Völuspá, Str. 29, 30. Grimnism. Str. 44. Hyndlulj. Str. 37. Hervarars. c. 15. Völsungas. c. 13.

Of the Ship Skidbladnir[1] (Skiþblaþnir).—This ship was constructed in the beginning of time, by the dwarfs, sons of Ivaldi[2], who made a present of it to Frey. It is the best and most curiously constructed of all ships, though Naglfar, belonging to Muspell, is the largest. But respecting this famous ship there is another story. Loki, out of mischief, once cut all Sif's hair off. When this came to the knowledge of Thor, he threatened to crush every bone in him, if he did not get the svart-elves to make her a head of hair of gold, that should grow like natural hair. Loki thereupon went to the sons of Ivaldi, who made the hair for him, together with the ship Skidbladnir, and the spear possessed by Odin, Gungnir.

Loki afterwards wagered his head with the dwarf Brock, that the latter's brother Sindri (Æitri) was unable to make three such precious things. They then went to the smithy. Sindri laid a swine's skin on the fire, and desired Brock to blow until he took it from the forge. But while he was gone out, and Brock stood blowing, there came a gad-fly[3], which settled on his hand and stung him. Brock, nevertheless, went on blowing until his brother returned and took what was forged from the fire. It was a hog with golden bristles. The smith then put gold into the fire, and desiring his brother to blow without intermission until he returned, went away. The gad-fly came again, fixed itself on his neck, and stung him twice as sorely as before; but Brock continued blowing until the smith came back, and took from the fire the gold ring called Draupnir. The third time Sindri put iron into the fire, and exhorted his brother to blow without ceasing, for else all would be

[1] From skið, *a thin plank*, and blað, *a leaf*, &c.

[2] This Ivaldi, the parent of certain dwarfs, is not to be confounded with the elf Ivald, the father of Idun.

[3] That is, Loki under the form of a gad-fly.

spoiled. The gad-fly now took his post over Brock's eye, and stung his eyebrow; and as the blood trickled down, so that he could not see, he raised his hand in haste, thereby causing the bellows for a moment to stand still, while he drove away the gad-fly. At this moment the smith returned, and said that what was in the fire had been nearly spoiled. On taking it forth, it proved to be a hammer. Sindri intrusted these things to his brother, saying, he could now go to Asgard and get the wager decided. Sindri and Loki now appearing, each with his treasures, the Æsir took their places on their judgement-seats, and it was agreed that whatever Odin, Thor, and Frey might decide should be valid.

Loki made a present to Odin of the spear Gungnir, to Thor of the hair for Sif, to Frey of Skidbladnir, and, at the same time, explained the virtues of these presents: how the spear never failed to strike whatever it was aimed at; how the hair would grow rapidly as soon as it was placed on Sif's head; and that Skidbladnir would always have a fair wind, when the sails were set, and was withal so capacious that it could contain all the gods with their weapons and armour, but, at the same time, contrived so ingeniously, and of so many pieces, that it might be folded up like a cloth and put into one's pocket.

Now came Brock forwards with his wonderful handi-works. To Odin he gave the ring, saying that every ninth night eight rings equally precious would drop from it. To Frey he gave the hog, adding that it could run more swiftly than any horse, on air and sea, and that even in the darkest night a sufficiency of light would shine from its bristles. To Thor he gave the hammer, and said that he might strike with it with all his might whatever object came before him, without receiving any hurt; however far he might cast it, he should never lose it, but that it would always return to his hand, and, whenever he

wished it, would become so small that he might put it in his pocket: its only defect was, that the haft was rather short[1].

The judgement was, that the hammer was the best work of all, as they would find in it a powerful defence against the frost-giants; and that the dwarf had, consequently, won the wager. Loki offered ransom for his head, but the dwarf rejected it. "Well, take me then," said Loki; but when the dwarf would lay hands on him, he was already far away; for he had on shoes with which he could run both on air and water. The dwarf then begged of Thor to take him, and he did so; but when he was about to cut his head off, Loki told him that the head was his, but not the neck. The dwarf then took a thong and a knife, and would pierce holes in Loki's lips, in order to sew his mouth up; but the knife would not cut. "It were well," said he, "if I now had my brother's awl," and the instant he named it, it was there. The awl did its duty, and with the thong, which was called Vartari, the dwarf stitched up the lips of Loki[2].

Origin of the Skaldic or Poetic Art.—When the Æsir made peace with the Vanir, in token of amity, they mingled their saliva in a vessel. Of the contents of this vessel the gods created the man Kvasir. He was so wise that no one could ask him a question that he was unable to answer; and he travelled far and wide to impart his knowledge to mankind. Being invited to a feast by the dwarfs Fialar and Galar, they took him aside, under the pretext of a secret communication, and slew him. His blood they let run into two vessels, named Sôn and Bodn, and into the kettle Odhrærir (Oðhrærir). With the blood they mingled honey, and thus composed the mead which makes every one that partakes of it a skald or a wise man.

[1] Owing to the interruption caused by the gad-fly.

[2] Grimnism. Str. 43. Gylf. 43. Skáldskap. 35.

To the Æsir they said that Kvasir was drowned in his own wisdom.

These dwarfs afterwards invited to them a giant named Gilling, and his wife, and rowed out with him to sea; but when they were some distance from land, they ran on a rock, and upset the boat, and Gilling, who could not swim, was drowned. Having set the boat right, they returned home. On relating to Gilling's wife what had befallen her husband, she was inconsolable, and wept bitterly. Fialar then asked her whether it would alleviate her sorrow to look on the sea where her husband had perished. She answered in the affirmative, when he desired his brother Galar to go up over the door, and as she was going out, to let a millstone fall on her head, as he could not endure her lamentations. The brother did as he was desired. When Suttung, the son of Gilling, was informed of what had taken place, he set out, seized the dwarfs, took them out to sea, and placed them on a rock that at high tide was under water. They prayed for their lives, and offered to give him, as blood-fine, the precious mead, which he accepted. Suttung then took the mead home, deposited it in the mountain Hnitbiörg, under the custody of his daughter Gunnlöd. Hence it is that poetry is called Kvasir's blood, the drink of the dwarfs, Odhrœrir's, or Sôn's, or Bodn's liquor, or the dwarfs' passage-supply (because it supplied the means of saving their lives from the rock), or Suttung's mead, or Hnitbiörg's water.

Odin being very desirous to obtain this mead, left home, and came to a place where nine thralls were cutting hay. He asked them whether he should whet their sithes. They thanked him for his offer, and taking a whetstone from his belt, he sharpened them so that they cut much better, and they wished to buy the stone. Odin then threw it up in the air, when in struggling to seize it, each turned his sithe on the neck of another. Odin sought shelter for the

night at a giant's named Baugi, a brother of Suttung, who complained bitterly of the loss he had sustained, saying that his nine thralls had killed each other, and that he knew not whence he was to get labourers. Odin, who now called himself Bölverk, offered to perform the work of nine men, on condition of receiving in reward a drink of Suttung's mead. Baugi told him that he had no power over the mead, and added, that Suttung wished to have it all to himself; but that he would go with Bölverk, and endeavour to get it. During summer he performed the work of nine men for Baugi, and when winter came, demanded his reward. They thereupon went to Suttung, whom Baugi informed of the agreement, but Suttung would not part with a drop of the mead. Bölverk then proposed that they should try some stratagem, if they could not otherwise get at the mead; to which proposal Baugi assented. Bölverk then produced the auger named Rati, and requested Baugi, if the auger were sharp enough, to bore into the mountain. Baugi did so, and said that the mountain was penetrated; but when Bölverk blew into the hole, the dust made by the auger flew towards him, and he found that Baugi was deceiving him, and desired him to bore again. He bored, and when Bölverk again blew, the dust flew inwards. Bölverk now, assuming the form of a worm, crept in. Baugi made a stab after him with the auger, but missed him. Bölverk then went to the place where Gunnlöd was, with whom he stayed three nights, and obtained her permission to drink thrice of the mead. At the first draught he emptied Odhrærir; at the second, Bodn; and at the third, Sôn; and thus drank up all the mead. Then assuming an eagle's garb, he flew away with all possible speed. But Suttung, who saw the eagle's flight, also took his eagle's plumage, and flew after him. When the Æsir saw Odin flying towards them, they set out vessels in the court, and on entering Asgard, he spat the mead

into the vessels. But Suttung was then so close at his heels, that he nearly overtook him, thereby causing some of the mead to go in another direction; but this not being noticed, every one partook of it that would. This is called the poetasters' portion. Odin gave Suttung's mead to the Æsir, and to those who can compose good verses; therefore is the skaldic art called Odin's booty, Odin's find, and his drink, and his gift, and the drink of the Æsir[1].

Of the Abduction and Restoration of Idun.—On this subject there are two compositions, one in Sæmund's Edda (Hrafna-galdur Oðins, or Odin's Ravens' Song), further mention of which, on account of its obscurity, and consequent lack of interest to the general reader, is here omitted; the other is in Snorri's Edda, and is as follows.

The Æsir, Odin, Loki and Hœnir, once set out from home, and took their way over mountains and desert places, where they suffered from want of food; but on descending into a valley, they perceived a herd of oxen, one of which they slaughtered for the purpose of boiling it. When they thought it was done enough they looked at it, but it was not boiled through. Some time after, they looked at it again, and still it was not done. While talking the matter over, and wondering what could be its cause, they heard a voice above them, in the branches of an oak, and looking up, perceived an eagle of no small dimensions, which said to them, "If ye will give me a bellyful of the ox, it shall soon be boiled." They promised that they would; whereupon the eagle descended from the tree, placed himself on the boiled carcase, and forthwith snatched up, for his part, one of the thighs and both shoulders. Seeing this, Loki waxed wroth, and seizing a huge pole, thrust it with all his might at the eagle, which nevertheless effected its

[1] Bragaræður, 57, 58. Hávam. Str. 14, 15, 106–112. Rúnatalsþ. Oð. Str. 3.

escape, and flew up, with one end of the pole hanging in its body, and the hand of Loki fast to the other. As the eagle flew, Loki's feet were dragged over stones, hillocks and trees, and he thought his arm would be torn from his shoulder. He screamed and prayed for mercy, but was told by the eagle that he should not be loosed until he had sworn to bring Idun with her apples out of Asgard. Loki having sworn, was released accordingly, and with his companions returned to Asgard.

On a certain time, he told Idun, that in a wood just without Asgard he had found some splendid apples, and so enticed her out, bidding her to take her own with her, for the sake of comparing them. Then came the giant Thiassi in his eagle's plumage (for he was the eagle), seized Idun, and flew with her to his home. But it fared badly with the Æsir while Idun was absent; they quickly grew gray and old. Thereupon they held a meeting, and inquired one of another, who had seen her last, when it was found that she went out of Asgard with Loki. Loki was now seized, and brought to the meeting, and threatened with torments and death, if he did not bring Idun back from Jötunheim. Terrified at their threats, he engaged to bring her back, provided Freyia would lend him her falcon's plumage; having obtained which, he flew northwards to Jötunheim, and reached the abode of the giant, where he found Idun alone, Thiassi being gone out to sea. Loki transformed her into a nut, took her in his talons, and hastily flew away. Thiassi on his return home missing her, took his eagle's plumage and flew after Loki, and had nearly caught him; but the Æsir seeing the falcon with the nut in his talons, and the eagle closely following, went to the wall of the city, carrying with them loads of chips, to which, as soon as the falcon entered and had glided down within the wall, they set fire; so that the eagle, unable to check his rapid flight, burned his wings, and being

thus disabled was slain by the Æsir. Of Thiassi we are besides told that his father's name was Ölvaldi, who possessed much gold. His sons, Thiassi, Idi, and Gang, shared the inheritance among them, by each in his turn taking a mouthful[1].

Of Niörd (Niörþr) and Skadi (Skaþi).—Skadi, the daughter of Thiassi, took helm and corselet, and went fully armed to Asgard, to avenge the death of her father. The Æsir offered her peace and compensation, and granted her permission to choose herself a husband among them, though under the condition that she should see their feet only. She accordingly went round among them, saw a pair of handsome feet, and said, "This one I choose; few blemishes are to be found in Baldur." She had, nevertheless, made a mistake, for the feet belonged to Niörd of Noatûn. Another article of peace was, that one of the Æsir should cause her to laugh, a task successfully performed by Loki, who played some ludicrous antics with a goat. It is further related, that Odin (or Thor) took Thiassi's eyes, cast them up to the heavens, and formed of them two stars. Niörd married Skadi, but dissension soon sprang up between them; for Skadi would dwell among the mountains, in her father's abode, Thrymheim, while Niörd liked to be near the sea. At length it was agreed, that they should stay alternately nine days in Thrymheim, and three in Noatûn[2]. But when Niörd returned from the mountains to his Noatûn, he said:

Loathsome are the hills;
long seem'd to me
nine nights only.
The noise of wolves
sounded ill, compared
with the swan's song.

[1] Bragaræður, 56. Hyndlulj. Str. 29.

[2] Or, according to another MS., "and *another nine* in Noatûn."

But Skadi answered,

> Sleep I got not
> by the sea-waves,
> for wail of birds
> from the wood coming;
> the sea-mew me each morn
> with its scream waked[1].

She then went up into the mountain, and abode in Thrymheim, where she runs on snow-skates, and shoots wild beasts with her bow; hence she is called Öndurgud or Öndurdis (the goddess of snow-skates). "From her habitation and fields ever come cold (pernicious) counsels to Loki," who had been foremost in causing her father's death[2].

Of Frey and Gerd (Gerþr).—Frey had one day seated himself in Hlidskialf, and was looking over all the worlds, when on turning to Jötunheim, he there cast his eyes on Gerd, a beautiful maiden, the daughter of Gymir and Aurboda, relations of Thiassi, as she was going from her father's hall to her maiden-bower. On raising her arms to open the door, both air and water gave such a reflection that the whole world was illumined. Frey descended from Hlidskialf with a heart full of love and care, went home, spoke not, drank not, slept not, nor did any one venture to speak to him. This penalty Frey brought on himself, for having presumed to sit in Odin's sacred seat. On seeing him in this state, Niörd, his father, sent for Skirnir, Frey's attendant[3], and bade him go to his son and

[1] See in Saxo (p. 53) the Song of Hading and Regnild, beginning—

Hading loq. Quid moror in latebris opacis,
Collibus implicitus scruposis, &c.

To which Regnild answers,

Me canorus angit ales immorantem littori
Et soporis indigentem garriendo concitat, &c.

The whole story of Hading and Regnild bears a striking resemblance to the myth of Niörd and Skadi.

[2] Bragaræður, 56. Gylf. 23. Grimnism. Str. 11. Harbarðslj. Str. 19. Lokaglepsa, Str. 50, 51.

[3] Skósveinn, *shoe-boy*.

inquire what had so disturbed his temper. Skirnir went accordingly, and asked his master, why he sat all day alone in the great halls. "How," answered Frey, "shall I describe my affliction to thee? The elves' illuminator (the sun) shines every day, but never to my pleasure." "Confide to me thy sorrow," said Skirnir; "at the beginning of time we lived young together, and we ought to have confidence in each other." Frey now recounted to him how he had seen, in Gymir's mansion, the maid with the bright arms; that he loved her more fervently than a youth loves in the spring of his days; but that neither Æsir nor Alfar would permit them to come together. "Give me but thy swift courser," said Skirnir, "which can bear me through murky flames, and thy sword, which fells of itself the giant race, when he is stout who wields it." Then rode Skirnir, and said to the horse: "Dark it is without, it is time for us to go over hoar mountains, amid giant folk; we shall both return, or that mighty giant will take us both." And Skirnir rode to Jötunheim, to Gymir's mansion, where he found fierce dogs chained at the gate of the enclosure. He rode up to a herdsman who was sitting on a hillock, and asked him how he could pass by Gymir's dogs and get speech of the young maiden? "Art thou doomed to death, or art thou a spectre? never wilt thou get speech of Gymir's good daughter." To this answer of the herdsman Skirnir replied, "There is a better choice than to sob for him who voluntarily meets death; my life was decreed to one day only, and my days determined by fate." But Gerd hears the stranger and says, "What noise of noises do I hear in our halls? The earth shakes with it, and all Gymir's courts tremble." Her waiting-maid answers, "Here is a man without descended from his horse, which he lets graze." "Bid him," said Gerd, "enter our hall and drink the bright mead, though I fear that my brother's slayer stands without." On his

entrance Gerd says, "Which of the Alfar's, or of the Æsir's or the wise Vanir's sons art thou? Why comest thou alone over raging flames[1] to see our halls?" Skirnir then declares his errand. For a long time she withstood his prayer, that she would dwell with Frey. He promised her eleven golden apples, in reward for her love, but she would not accept them. He promised to give her the ring Draupnir, which had been laid on the pile with Odin's young son Baldur, but she declined it, saying that she lacked not gold in her father's house. He threatened to strike off her head, with the bright sword that he held in his hand, under which even the old giant her father must sink; to strike her with the taming wand; that she should go where the sons of men would never see her more; should pass her life on the eagle's mount, turned from the world towards Hel, and food should be more loathsome to her than Midgard's serpent[2] to the sons of men; that when she comes out she should be a spectacle at which Hrîmnir and all beings would stare, a monster set forth for mockery and scorn. "Sit," said he, "and I will announce to thee a dire flood of bitterness, and double misery. Terrors shall beset thee all the day in the giants' dwellings; each day shalt thou wander about without joy; weeping shall be thy lot, instead of pastime, and tears shall accompany thy pain. With a three-headed giant thou shalt drag out thy life, or die a maiden; from morn to morn thy mind shall be in alarm, and thou shalt be as the thistle that withers on the house-top." Then swinging over her his magic wand, he pronounced the malediction, "Wroth with thee is Odin! Wroth with thee is the Æsir's prince! Frey shall shun thee, thou evil maiden! when

[1] See the account of Brynhild's bower in the story of the Völsungs hereafter; also Fiölsvinnsmál, Str. 2. Such fiery fences round a 'borg' seem to have been not unfrequent.

[2] Of this monster hereafter.

thou art stricken by the vengeance of the gods. Hear it, giants! Hear it, frost-giants, and sons of Suttung[1], and ye, friends of the Æsir[2]! how I forbid and hinder thee from man's society! Hrîmgrimnir the giant is named that shall possess thee below in the barred dwelling of the dead, where misery's thralls shall give thee only goats' water to drink. I cut for thee *Thurs*[3], and three letters, *feebleness, frenzy* and *impatience*. I will cut them off[4] as I have cut them on: do thou only choose." "Be thou greeted, youth!" said Gerd, "and in welcome take the icy cup filled with old mead; although I never thought to feel well-disposed towards a man of the Vanir's race." She then promised to be with the son of Niörd in nine days, in the warm wood of Barri. Skirnir rode home, and announced the happy result of his journey; but full of desire, Frey exclaimed, "One night is long, long are two; how shall I endure three? Oftentimes a month seems to me shorter than the half of such nights of desire."

Frey having thus parted with his sword, was unarmed when he fought with Beli[5], whom he slew with a stag's horn, although he could have killed him with his hand: but the time will come when the loss of his sword will cost him more dearly, when Muspell's sons go forth to battle[6].

Of Loki's Offspring.—By Angurboda (Angrboþa), a giantess of Jötunheim, Loki had three children, viz. the wolf Fenrir, the Midgard's serpent or Jormungand, and Hel, the goddess of death. When the Æsir discovered that these three were being bred up in Jötunheim, and called to mind the predictions, that they would prove a

[1] The dwarfs. [2] The elves.

[3] The name of one of the letters of the runic alphabet.

[4] "I will cut them off," that is, "I will, by erasing the runes, dissolve the spell," in the case of Gerd's compliance.

[5] The myth of Frey and Beli is lost.

[6] Gylf. 37. Skirnisför, Lokaglepsa, Str. 42. Völuspá, Str. 54. Hyndlulj. Str. 29.

source of great calamity to them, there being much evil to expect from them on the mother's side, and still more on the father's, All-father sent the gods to fetch the children. When they came, he cast the serpent into the deep ocean which surrounds all lands; but there it grew and became so great that it encircles the whole world, and bites its own tail. From hence it heaves itself up with violence towards heaven, rises up on land, causes the air to tremble, and sends snow, and stormy winds, and pattering rain over the earth. Hel he cast down into Niflheim, and gave her authority over nine worlds, that she might assign their places to those who are sent to her, namely, all those that die of sickness or age. Her abode of vast extent is surrounded by a high enclosure with large gates. Her hall is called Eliudnir (nimbos sive procellas late accipiens); her dish, Hungr (hunger); her knife, Sullt (starvation); her serving-man, Ganglâti (slowly moving); her woman-servant, Ganglöt (the same, but feminine); her threshold, Fallanda forat (perilous precipice); her bed, Kör (the bed of sickness); her curtains or hangings, Blikianda böl (splendid misery). She is half black, half flesh-coloured, and therefore easily recognised, and very fierce and grim of aspect. The wolf was bred up among the Æsir; but only Týr had the courage to give him food. When the gods saw how much he increased daily, and as all the predictions declared that he was destined to be their destruction, they resolved on having a very strong chain made for him, called Læding (Læþingr), which they took to the wolf, that he might prove his strength on it. The wolf, to whom the chain did not appear over strong, let them do as they would; but the moment he stretched himself it brake, and he was again loose. They then made another chain half as strong again, called Dromi. This likewise the wolf was to try, they assuring him that he would be renowned for his strength, if so strong a bond

could not confine him. The wolf saw plainly that this chain was exceedingly strong, but at the same time felt that his power was greatly increased since he brake the bond Læding. It likewise occurred to him, that if he would become famous, he must expose himself to some risk. He therefore allowed them to fasten him with the chain. When the Æsir had chained him, the wolf shook himself, kicked, and dashed it on the earth, so that the fragments flew far away. Thus did he free himself from Dromi. It is since become a proverb, "to get loose from Læding," or, "to burst out of Dromi," when anything is to be done with great exertion.

The Æsir being now fearful that they would be unable to bind the wolf, sent Skirnir, Frey's messenger, to some dwarfs in Svart-Alfheim, and caused them to make the chain Gleipnir, which was composed of six materials, viz. the sound of a cat's footsteps, a woman's beard, the roots of a mountain, a bear's sinews, a fish's breath, and a bird's spittle. This chain was as soft and supple as a silken cord, though of exceedingly great strength. The gods then, taking the wolf with them, went to the isle of Lyngvi, in the lake Amsvartnir. There they showed him the bond, asking him whether he could snap it asunder, as it was somewhat stronger than, judging from its thickness, it appeared to be. They then handed it from one to another, and tried to break it, but in vain: "but the wolf," said they, "could easily break it in pieces." The wolf answered, "It does not seem to me that any great honour is to be gained by breaking so slender a thread, but as some cunning and deception may have been employed in making it appear so slight, it shall never come on my feet." The Æsir said, that he might easily break a silken cord, having already snapt asunder such strong bonds of iron, and adding, "Even if thou canst not break it, thou hast nothing to fear from us, for we shall instantly release

thee." The wolf answered, "If ye bind me so fast that I cannot free myself again, I am well convinced that I shall wait long to be released by you: I am, therefore, not at all desirous to let the cord be fastened on me. But rather than that ye shall accuse me of want of courage, let one of you place his hand in my mouth as a pledge that there is no guile in the case." The gods now looked at one another, but not one would put forth his hand. At length Týr stretched forth his right hand, and placed it within the jaws of the wolf. The wolf now began to struggle, and the more he strove to get loose, the more tightly did the bond bind him. Hereat they all set up a laugh, except Týr, who lost his hand for his rashness. When the Æsir saw that the wolf was effectually bound, they took the end of the chain, called Gelgia, which was fastened to the bond, and drew it through a huge rock named Giöll, which they secured far down in the earth, and beat down still lower with a fragment of rock named Thviti. In his yawning jaws they stuck a sword, the hilt of which was driven into his lower jaw, while the point penetrated the upper one. He howls dreadfully, and the foam that issues from his mouth forms the river called Von; whence he is also called Vanargand (Vanargandr). There will he lie till Ragnaröck [1].

Of Thor and his journeys there were many stories, of which the following are preserved.

Thor in the House of Geirröd (Geirröþr)[2].—Loki for his amusement had one day flown out in Frigg's falcon-plumage, and came to the mansion of Geirröd, where seeing a spacious hall, and prompted by curiosity, he perched himself, and peeped in at a window. Geirröd having caught a glimpse of him, ordered one of his people to catch and bring the bird to him; but the man to whom the order was given found difficulty in clambering up

[1] Gylf. 34. Hyndlulj. Str. 27–39. Lokaglepsa, Str. 38.

[2] See a travestie of this story in Saxo, pp. 420–428.

along the high wall, and Loki, who sat chuckling over the difficulties the man had to encounter, fancied he could fly away before he had surmounted them. So when at length the man made a grasp at him, Loki flapped his wings, in order to fly away; but his feet having got entangled in something, he was caught and brought to the giant, who as soon as he looked at his eyes suspected that he was a man, and commanded him to speak; but Loki was silent. The giant then locked him up in a chest, where he had to undergo a fast of three months' duration. At length the giant took him out, and again ordered him to speak, when Loki told him who he was; and, to save his life, promised on oath that he would bring Thor thither, without either hammer or belt of power. Loki persuaded Thor to undertake the journey. On their way they stopt at the giantess Grid's (Griþr), the mother of Vidar the Silent, who advised Thor to be on his guard against Geirröd, who was a crafty knave, with whom it was not desirable to have any intercourse. She at the same time lent him a belt of power, an iron glove, and her staff named Gridarvöll. Pursuing their journey, they came to the river Vimur, the greatest of all rivers, to cross which Thor girded himself with the belt, and supported himself against the stream on Grid's staff, while Loki took fast hold of the belt. On reaching the middle of the stream, they found it so greatly increased that the water washed over Thor's shoulders; when, on looking up towards a part of the river between two steep rocks, he perceived Gialp, one of Geirröd's daughters, standing with a foot on each bank, and found that it was she who had caused the river to rise; whereupon, seizing a heavy stone, he cast it at her, saying, "The river must be stopt at its spring." At the same time wading towards the shore, he took hold of some sorb-bushes, and so got to land. Hence the proverb: "The sorb is Thor's salvation." When he came to Geirröd's, a

lodging was assigned him in a chamber where there was only one chair; sitting on which, he found that the seat rose with him up to the roof, whereupon, placing Grid's staff against the rafters, and pressing against it with all his might, a loud crash was heard, accompanied by an appalling cry. Geirröd's daughters, Gialp and Greip, were under the seat, and Thor had broken their backs. After this Geirröd invited Thor into his hall to play. Along one side of the hall were huge fires, from which, as Thor came just opposite to Geirröd, the latter, with a pair of tongs, snatched a red-hot iron wedge, and hurled it at Thor, who catching it with his iron glove cast it back. Geirröd took refuge behind an iron pillar, but Thor had hurled the wedge with such force, that it passed through the pillar, through Geirröd, through the wall, and deep into the earth without[1].

The Hammer fetched.—Ving-Thor awoke and missed his hammer; his beard shook, and his head trembled with rage. He made known his loss to Loki, and they went to Freyia's fair abode, to borrow her falcon-plumage. In this Loki flew to Jötunheim, and found the giant chieftain, Thrym, sitting on an eminence without his dwelling, plaiting a collar of gold for his dog, and smoothing the manes of his horses. "How fares it with the Æsir," said he, "and how with the Alfar? Why comest thou alone to the giants' land?" "Ill fares it with the Æsir, ill with the Alfar. Hast thou hidden Hörridi's hammer?" an-

[1] Skáldskap. 18. According to the popular belief, the lightning is accompanied by a black bolt or projectile, which penetrates as far as the highest church steeple is long into the earth, but rises towards the surface every time it thunders, and at the expiration of seven years again makes its appearance on the earth. Every house in which such a stone is preserved is secure from the effects of thunder-storms, on the approach of which it begins to sweat. Grimm, D. M. pp. 163–165. The same idea seems expressed by the myth that the hammer always returns to Thor's hand. See p. 39.

swered Loki. "Yes," replied Thrym, "I have hidden it nine miles underground, and no one shall get it back, unless he brings me Freyia for a bride." Loki then flew back in his rustling plumage, with the giant's message, and informed Thor where the hammer was, and of the condition on which alone it could be recovered. On this they both went to the lovely Freyia, to whom they communicated the affair, and Loki said, "Adorn thyself then with a bridal veil, and we two will go together to Jötunheim." But Freyia snorted with anger, so that the hall trembled under her, and her necklace, the Brisinga-men, snapt asunder, and she said, "I must, indeed, be very fond of men's society, if I went with thee to Jötunheim." All the Æsir now held a meeting, and all the goddesses went to their rendezvous, to consult how the hammer should be recovered. Then said Heimdall the Wise, who as a Van saw well into the future, "Let us bind a bridal veil on Thor, and decorate him with the Brisinga-men; let keys jingle at his side, female attire fall about his knees, precious stones adorn his breast, and an elegant head-dress his head." But Thor, the mighty god, answered, "The Æsir would jeer me, if I allowed myself to be dressed out in a bridal veil." Loki then represented to them that the giants would take up their abode in Asgard, if Thor did not fetch back his hammer. So they bound a bridal veil on Thor, and decorated him with the famed Brisinga-men, let keys jingle at his side, female attire fall about his knees, set precious stones on his breast, and an elegant head-dress on his head. Loki accompanied him as a waiting-maid. The goats ran, the mountains burst, the earth stood in a blaze, when Odin's son drove to Jötunheim. Then said the giant chief, "Stand up, giants! lay cushions on the benches, and lead to me Freyia as a bride. Let gold-horned cows and coal-black oxen be brought in multitudes to my dwelling. Of ornaments I have enough,

enough of treasures[1]; Freyia alone was wanting to my happiness."

Early in the evening the giants assembled, and the festivity began. Thor alone devoured an ox, eight salmon, and all the dainties that are offered to ladies; to which, by way of slaking his thirst, he added three huge vessels of mead. In amazement Thrym exclaimed, "Never did I see a bride eat so voraciously, or drink so much mead." But the prudent waiting-maid said, "For eight nights and days Freyia has eaten nothing, so fervently did she long after Jötunheim." The giant then raised her veil, and bent forwards, with the intention of kissing his bride, but starting back in terror, rushed through the hall, exclaiming, "Why has Freyia so piercing a look? Her eyes burn like fire." But the wily waiting-maid answered, "For eight nights and days Freyia has had no sleep, so fervently did she long after Jötunheim." Then came in the giant's unlucky sister, to ask for a bridal gift, and said, "Give me the rings of red gold from thy hand, if thou wilt gain my love and favour." Thrym then said, "Bring now the hammer in, to consecrate the bride; lay Miölnir in the maiden's lap, and unite us in the name of Vör[2]." But the heart of Hlorridi, the stalwart god, laughed in his breast, when he felt the hammer in his hand. First he slew Thrym, then the whole giant tribe; and the giant's sister got gashes for skillings, and hammer-strokes for ruddy rings. And thus did Odin's son get his hammer again[3].

Of Thor and Utgarda-Loki[4].—Once on a time Thor

[1] Indians, Greeks and Scandinavians have been accustomed to adorn the horns of cows with gilding. It has been remarked that even in recent times the practice is not quite obsolete in the North; the ox that was given to the people at the coronation of Christian VII. having had gilded horns. F. Magnusen, Den Ældre Edda, ii. 124.

[2] See page 35.

[3] Hamarsheimt.

[4] See a travestie of this story in Saxo, pp. 429, *sq.*

drove out in his chariot with the goats, together with Asa-Loki, and in the evening they came to a countryman's house. The goats were killed and boiled, and Thor invited the countryman and his wife, his son Thialfi, and his daughter Röskva to partake of the repast; and desired them to throw the bones into the goat-skins, which he had laid by the side of the hearth. But Thialfi broke a thigh-bone, in order to get at the marrow. Thor remained there during the night, rose at dawn, raised Miölnir on high, consecrated the goat-skins with it, and the goats sprang up, but one was lame of a hind-leg. He called to the countryman, who was ready to sink on seeing the angry brow of the god, and his knuckles white with clenching the haft of Miölnir. Both the man and his family sued for pardon, and offered to give all they possessed, in compensation for the misfortune. Thor seeing them thus terrified, mitigated his anger, and contented himself with taking Thialfi and Röskva as his servants, who attended him ever after. Leaving the goats behind, he resolved on proceeding eastward to Jötunheim, in the direction of the sea, which he crossed, accompanied by Loki, Thialfi, and Röskva. After travelling a short distance they came to a vast forest, in which they journeyed the whole day till dark; Thialfi, who of all men was swiftest of foot, bearing Thor's wallet, though provisions to fill it were not easily to be had. Looking now on all sides for a place wherein to pass the night, they found a very spacious house, with a door at one end as broad as the house itself. They entered, and betook themselves to rest; but at midnight the earth shook under them, and the house trembled. Thor arose and called to his companions. Groping their way, they found a chamber on the right, which they entered, but Thor set himself in the door-way with hammer in hand. Those within were much terrified, for they heard a great din and crash. At dawn

Thor went out, and saw a man of gigantic stature lying close by in the forest: he was sleeping, and snored loudly. Thor, who could now understand whence the noise during the night proceeded, buckled his belt of power about him, by which his divine might was increased. At this moment the man awoke, and stood up. It is said that Thor did not venture to strike him with his hammer, but merely asked him his name. He was called Skrymir or Skrymnir. "I need not," said he, "inquire thy name, for I know thou art Asa-Thor; but what hast thou done with my glove?" At the same moment stooping down and taking up his glove. Thor then saw that the house in which they had passed the night was the glove, and the chamber its thumb. Skrymir then asked whether he might accompany them; Thor answered in the affirmative. Skrymir then untied his wallet, and began eating his breakfast, while Thor and his companions did the same, though in another place. He then proposed that they should lay their provisions together, to which Thor also assented. Skrymir then put all the provisions into one bag, took it on his back, and walked stoutly on before them. Late in the evening Skrymir sought a resting-place for them under a large oak, saying that he would lie down and sleep: "But," added he, "do you take the wallet, and prepare your supper." Skrymir immediately began to sleep, and snored lustily. Thor now took the wallet to open it, and, incredible as it may seem, could not untie a single knot, nor make one strap looser than it was before. Seeing that all his exertions were fruitless, Thor grew angry, and grasping Miölnir with both hands, and advancing one foot, struck Skrymir, where he was lying, a blow on the head. At this Skrymir awoke, and asked whether a leaf had fallen on his head? whether they had supped and were ready for bed? Thor answered that they were then going to sleep. They went then under

another oak. At midnight Thor heard Skrymir snoring so that it resounded like thunder through the forest. He arose and approached him, clenching his hammer with all his might, and struck him on the crown of the head, so that the hammer's head sank deep into his skull. Skrymir on this awoke, saying, "What is that? Did an acorn fall on my head? How goes it with thee, Thor?" But Thor stept quickly back, saying he was just awake; that as it was only midnight, they might sleep a while longer. He now thought that if he could only succeed in giving him a third blow, it was not probable he would ever see the light again; and lay watching until Skrymir had again fallen asleep. Towards daybreak, perceiving that the giant slept soundly, he arose, raised Miölnir with all his might, and struck Skrymir a blow on the temple, so that the hammer sank up to the haft. But Skrymir, raising himself and stroking his chin, said, "Are there any birds above me in the tree? It seemed as I woke that a feather fell from the boughs on my head. Art thou awake, Thor? It is now time to get up and dress yourselves, though you are not far from the city called Utgard (Utgarþr). I have heard you chatting together, and saying that I was a man of no small stature; but you will see men still taller, when you come to Utgard. I will give you a piece of good advice: do not make too much of yourselves, for the followers of Utgarda-Loki will not feel inclined to endure big words from such mannikins. If you will take my advice, you will turn back, and that will, I think, be much better for you; but if you are resolved on proceeding, keep in an eastward direction. My course lies northwards to the mountains yonder." Then swinging his wallet across his shoulders, Skrymir left them, and took the path leading into the forest; and it has never been heard that the Æsir wished ever to meet with him again.

Thor and his companions travelled till the hour of noon,

when they saw before them a city, on a vast plain, so high that they had to bend back their necks in order to see to the top of it. The entrance was protected by a barred gate, which was locked. Thor endeavoured to open it, and failed; but being desirous to enter, they crept through the bars, and so gained admission. Before them was a spacious hall with open door, into which they passed, where, on two benches, sat a company of men, most of them very gigantic. They then went before the king, Utgarda-Loki, and greeted him; but he, just glancing at them, said with a contemptuous smile, "It is wearying to ask of travellers the particulars of a long journey; but is my surmise correct that this little fellow is Auku-Thor? though, perhaps, you are taller than you appear to be. What feats can you and your followers perform? for no one is suffered here, who in one or other art or talent does not excel others." Then said Loki, who entered last, "One feat I can exhibit, and which I am willing to perform forthwith, and that is that I can devour my food as expeditiously as any one." Utgarda-Loki answered, "That is certainly a notable feat, provided thou art able to perform it, and that we will put to the proof." He then called a man from the bench, by name Logi (flame), and commanded him to try his power with Loki. A trough full of meat was then placed on the floor, at one end of which Loki seated himself, and Logi at the other. Each ate to the best of his ability, and they met in the middle of the trough. Loki had eaten all the meat from the bones, while Logi had swallowed down meat, and bones, and the trough into the bargain. All were, therefore, unanimous that Loki was the loser at this game. Utgarda-Loki then asked at what game that young man could play? Thialfi answered, that he would try a race with any one that Utgarda-Loki might select. Utgarda-Loki said that that was a goodly craft, but added, that he must be very

swift-footed if he hoped to win at that game. He then rose and went out. Without on the plain there was a noble race-ground. Utgarda-Loki called to a young man named Hugi (thought), and ordered him to run a race with Thialfi. In the first run Hugi was so greatly ahead, that when he had reached the goal, he turned and came to meet Thialfi. "Thou must step out better than that," said Utgarda-Loki, "if thou wilt win; though I must allow that no one has ever come here before more swift-footed than thou." They now tried a second race. When Hugi was at the goal and turned round, there was a long bow-shot between him and Thialfi. "Thou art certainly a good runner," said Utgarda-Loki, "but thou wilt not, I think, gain the victory; though that will be seen when thou hast tried the third course. They now ran the third time, and when Hugi had already reached the goal, Thialfi had not arrived at the middle of the course. All were now unanimous that these trials were quite sufficient.

Utgarda-Loki now inquired of Thor what the performances were which he wished to exhibit before them, and which might justify the general report as to his great prowess. Thor answered that he would undertake to drink with any of his men. With this proposal Utgarda-Loki was content, and returning to the hall, ordered his cup-bearer to bring the horn of atonement, or punishment, out of which his men were wont to drink, saying, "When any one empties this horn at one draught, we call it well drunk; some empty it in two, but no one is so great a milksop that he cannot manage it in three." Thor looked at the horn, which did not appear to him particularly capacious, though it seemed rather long. Being very thirsty, he applied it to his mouth and took a long pull, thinking there would be no occasion for him to have recourse to it more than once; but on setting the horn down to see how much of the liquor had vanished, he found there

was nearly as much in it as before. "Thou hast drunk some, but no great deal," said Utgarda-Loki. "I could not have believed it, had it been told me, that Asa-Thor was unable to drink more. I am sensible, however, that thou wilt drink it all at the second draught." Instead of answering, Thor set the horn to his mouth, resolved on taking a greater draught than before, but could not raise the tip of the horn so high as he wished, and on taking it from his mouth, it seemed to him that he had imbibed still less than at the first pull; though now the horn was easy to carry without spilling. Utgarda-Loki then said, "How now, Thor, hast thou not left more than thou canst conveniently quaff off in one draught? It appears to me that if thou art to empty the horn at the third pull, thou hast left for that the greatest portion. But thou wilt not be thought so great a man here with us as thou art said to be among the Æsir, if thou dost not distinguish thyself more at other games than, as it seems to me, thou art likely to do at this." At this speech Thor waxed angry, raised the horn to his mouth and drank a third time with all his might, and as long as he was able; but when he looked into the horn, he saw that a part only of its contents had disappeared. He then put the horn aside and would have no more. "It is now pretty plain," said Utgarda-Loki, "that thou art not quite so mighty as we thought thee. Art thou inclined to try any other feats, for it is evident thou wilt not gain much at this." Thor answered, "I am willing to try another: though I wonder whether among the Æsir such draughts would be called little. But what feat hast thou now to propose?" Utgarda-Loki answered, "It is what my youngsters here do and make nothing of; it is merely to lift my cat from the ground. I should not, however, have proposed such a feat to Asa-Thor, had I not seen that thou art by no means the man I imagined thee to be." A huge gray cat then came

walking forth. Thor approaching it, took it under the belly and lifted it; but the cat arched its back, and when Thor had raised it as high as he could, one foot only was off the ground, but further than this Thor could make nothing at that sport. "It is just as I foresaw it would be," said Utgarda-Loki; "the cat is very large, and Thor is short and little compared with those present." "Little as I am," replied Thor, "I now challenge any one who likes to come forth and try a hug with me, now that I am angry." "There is no one here," said Utgarda-Loki, "who will not think it child's play to wrestle with thee; but call in the old crone Elli (age), my foster-mother. She has laid many a man on his mother earth, that did not appear weaker than Asa-Thor." The crone came in, and the game began; but the more he squeezed her in his arms the firmer she stood. She now endeavoured to trip him up; Thor soon began to totter, and a hard struggle ensued. It had not, however, lasted long before Thor sank on one knee. Utgarda-Loki now approached, and bade them cease, adding that Thor needed not challenge any more of his people, and that night was drawing near. He then caused Thor and his companions to be seated, and they stayed the night over as welcome guests.

The next morning at day-break the guests arose, and having dressed themselves, prepared for departure. Utgarda-Loki then came, and ordered a table to be set forth. There was no lack of hospitality with regard either to meat or drink. Having finished their repast, they betook themselves to their journey. Utgarda-Loki accompanied them out of the city, and at parting inquired of Thor how he thought his visit had come off, and whether he had met with any mightier men than himself? Thor answered, that he could not but acknowledge that their mutual intercourse had greatly redounded to his discredit; "and I know,"

added he, "that you will call me a very insignificant person, which vexes me exceedingly."

Utgarda-Loki answered, "Now that thou art out of the city, I will tell thee the real state of the case, which, if I live and have power, thou never again shalt enter; nor shouldst thou have entered it this time, had I previously known that thou hadst so great strength in thee, and wouldst have so nearly brought us to the verge of destruction. By magic alone I have deluded thee. When we first met in the forest, and thou wouldst unfasten the wallet, I had secured it with iron wire, which thou wast unable to undo. Thou didst then strike me thrice with thy hammer. The first blow was the least, and yet it would have caused my death, had it fallen on me. Thou sawest in my hall a rock with four square hollows in it, one of which was deeper than the others: these were the dints of thy hammer. I slipt the rock under the strokes without thy perceiving it. In like manner the sports were contrived, at which you contended with my people. With respect to the first, at which Loki proved his prowess, it was thus: Loki was certainly very hungry and ate voraciously; but he who was called Logi was fire, which consumed both meat and trough. The Hugi, with whom Thialfi strove in running, was my thought, with which it was impossible for him to contend. When thou didst drink from the horn with, as it seemed, so little effect, thou didst in sooth perform a miracle, such as I never imagined possible. The other end of the horn was out in the ocean, which thou didst not observe. When thou comest to the sea, thou wilt see how much it is diminished by thy draughts, which have caused what will now be called the ebb." Furthermore he said, "No less a feat does it seem to me when thou didst lift the cat; and, the sooth to say, all were terrified when they saw thee raise one of its feet

from the ground. For it was not a cat, as thou didst imagine, it was in fact the Midgard's serpent, which encircles the whole world. It had barely length enough for its head and tail to touch, in its circle round the earth, and thou didst raise it so high that it almost reached heaven. Thy wrestling with Elli was also a great miracle; for there never has been one, nor ever will be, if he be so old as to await Elli, that she will not cast to the earth. We must now part, and it will be best for both that thou dost not pay me a second visit. I can again protect my city by other spells, so that thou wilt never be able to effect aught against me."

On hearing these words, Thor raised his hammer, but when about to hurl it, Utgarda-Loki was no longer to be seen; and on turning towards the city, with the intention of destroying it, he saw a spacious and fair plain, but no city [1].

Of Thor and the Midgard's Serpent.—Shortly after his journey to Jötunheim, Thor, in the guise of a youth, departed from Midgard, and came one evening to a giant's named Hymir, where he passed the night. At dawn the giant rose, dressed himself, and made ready to row out to sea and fish. Thor also rose, dressed himself in haste, and begged of Hymir that he might accompany him. But Hymir answered, that he would be of little or no use to him, as he was so diminutive and young; "and," added he, "thou wilt die of cold, if I row out as far and stay as long as I am wont to do." Thor told him that he could row well, and that it was far from certain which of the two would first desire to reach land again. He was, moreover, so angry with the giant, that he almost longed to give him a taste of the hammer; he, however, suppressed his wrath, intending to prove his strength in some other

[1] Gylf. 45–47. Lokaglepsa, Str. 59, 60, 62. Hymiskv. Str. 37. Harbarðslj. Str. 26.

way. He then asked Hymir, what they should have for a bait, and received for answer, that he might provide one for himself; whereupon Thor, seeing a herd of oxen belonging to Hymir, wrung off the head of the largest, named Himinbriot, and took it with him down to the sea. Hymir had already launched his boat. Thor stept on board, placed himself abaft, and rowed so that Hymir was compelled to acknowledge that they were making a rapid course. Hymir at the same time rowed at the prow; and it was not long ere he said they were now come to the place where he was accustomed to catch flat-fish. But Thor was desirous of going still farther out, and they rowed a good way farther. Hymir then said, they were now come so far that it would be dangerous to remain there, on account of the Midgard's serpent; but Thor answered that he would row a while longer, and he did so. Then laying his oars aside, he attached a very strong hook to an equally strong line, fixed the ox's head on, as a bait, and cast it out. It must be confessed that Thor here tricked the Midgard's serpent no less than Utgarda-Loki had deceived him, when with his hand he undertook to lift the cat. Midgard's serpent gaped at the bait, and so got the hook into his jaw, of which he was no sooner sensible than he struggled so that Thor's hands were dashed on the side of the boat. Thor now waxed angry, assumed his divine strength, and resisted with such firmness, that his legs went through the boat, and he rested on the bottom of the sea. He then hauled the serpent up to the boat's edge. Dreadful it was to behold, how Thor cast his fiery looks on the serpent, and how the serpent glared on him and spat forth venom. Hymir changed colour and grew pale with terror, when he saw the serpent, and the water streaming into the boat; and as Thor was swinging his hammer, the giant in his trepidation drew forth his knife, and cut the line, and the serpent sank down into the ocean. Thor

hurled his hammer after it, and, it is said, struck off its head; but it lives there still. He then applied his fists to the giant's head, so that he fell backwards overboard. Thor waded to land[1].

In an older story, this myth is combined with another, which is as follows. The gods visited the giant Oegir, the god of the sea, but he was in want of a kettle to brew beer in for them, and not one among them knew how to procure one, until Týr said to Thor, that his father Hymir, who dwelt to the east of Elivâgar, at the end of heaven, had a very capacious kettle, a mile deep. Thereupon Thor and Týr went to Hymir's dwelling, where the first person they met with was Týr's grandmother, a horrible giantess with nine hundred heads: but afterwards there came forth another woman radiant with gold and light-browed. This was Týr's mother, who proffered them drink, and wished to hide them under the kettles in the hall, on account of Hymir, who often received his guests with grudge, and was given to anger. Hymir returned late from the chase, and came into the hall: the ice-bergs resounded with his steps, and a hard-frozen wood stood on his cheek. The woman announced to him that his son, whose coming they had long wished for, was arrived, but accompanied by their declared enemy, and that they were standing concealed behind a pillar in the hall. At a glance from the giant the pillar burst asunder, and the cross-beam was snapt in two, so that eight kettles fell down, of which one only was so firmly fabricated that it remained whole. Both guests now came forth, and Hymir eyed Thor with a suspicious look; he anticipated no good when he saw the giants' enemy standing on his floor. In the meanwhile three oxen were cooked, of which Thor alone ate two. At Thor's inordinate voracity Hymir naturally felt alarmed, and very plainly told him that the three must another evening be

[1] Gylf. 48.

content with living on what they could catch: so the next day they rowed out to fish, Thor providing the bait, as we have seen in the foregoing narrative. They rowed to the spot where Hymir was accustomed to catch whales, but Thor rowed out still farther. Hymir caught two whales at one haul, but the Midgard's serpent took Thor's bait. Having drawn the venomous monster up to the boat's edge, he struck its mountain-high head with his hammer; whereupon the rocks burst, it thundered through the caverns, old mother earth all shrank, even the fishes sought the bottom of the ocean; but the serpent sank back into the sea. Ill at ease and silent, Hymir returned home, and Thor carried the boat, together with the water it had shipt, bucket and oars, on his shoulders, back to the hall. The giant continued in his sullen mood, and said to Thor, that though he could row well, he had not strength enough to break his cup. Thor took the cup in his hand, and cast it against an upright stone, but the stone was shattered in pieces; he dashed it against the pillars of the hall, but the cup was entire when brought back to Hymir. The beautiful woman then whispered good advice in Thor's ear: "Cast it against Hymir's own forehead, which is harder than any cup." Thor then raising himself on his knee assumed his divine strength, and hurled the vessel against the giant's forehead. The old man's forehead remained sound as before, but the wine-cup was shivered in pieces. "Well done," exclaimed Hymir, "thou must now try whether thou canst carry the beer-vessel out of my hall." Týr made two attempts to lift it, but the kettle remained stationary. Thor then grasped it by the rim, his feet stamped through the floor of the hall, he lifted the kettle on his head, and its rings rang at his feet. He then started off with the kettle, and they journeyed long before he looked back, when he saw a host of many-headed giants swarming forth from the caverns with Hymir. Lifting

then the kettle from his head, he swang Miölnir, and crushed all the mountain-giants. Thus did the stout Thor bring to the assembly of the gods Hymir's kettle; so that they can now hold their feast with Oegir at flax-harvest[1].

There was a feast also given by Oegir to the gods, at which Loki ridiculed and reviled all the principal guests, and which forms the subject of an entire eddaic poem. On the above occasion, Oegir's hall was lighted with shining gold[2].

Of Thor and the Giant Hrungnir.—Odin once upon a time riding on his horse Sleipnir to Jötunheim, came to the giant Hrungnir's. Hrungnir asked who he was with a golden helmet, who rode through air and water? "Thine must," added he, "be a most powerful and excellent horse." Odin answered, that he would pledge his head that his horse's match was not to be found in Jötunheim. Hrungnir was, however, of opinion that his horse Gullfaxi (golden-mane) was far superior; and springing on it in anger, he rode after Odin, with the intention of paying him for his presumptuous words. Odin galloped at full speed, but Hrungnir followed him with such giant impetuosity, that before he was aware of it, he found himself within the barred inclosure of the Æsir. On reaching the gate of their hall, the Æsir invited him in to drink, and set before him the cups out of which Thor was wont to quaff. He drank of them all, became intoxicated, and threatened to take Valhall and carry it to Jötunheim, to sack Asgard and slay all the gods, except Freyia and Sif, whom he would take home with him. Freyia alone ventured to fill for him, and it appeared that he was well disposed to drink all the Æsir's beer. The

[1] Hymiskviða. The last line of this poem is very obscure; the meaning may be, that Oegir had now got a kettle, in which he could prepare arm beer for the gods.

[2] Lokaglepsa.

Æsir, who wished to hear no more of his idle vaunt, called for Thor, who came, raised his hammer, and asked who gave that insolent giant permission to be in Valhall, and why Freyia was filling for him, as at a festival of the Æsir? Hrungnir, looking not very benignantly on Thor, answered, that he came on the invitation of Odin, and was under his protection. Thor replied, that he should repent the invitation before his departure. Hrungnir then said, that Thor would gain but little honour in slaying him there, where he was without weapons; he would show more valour by meeting him in single combat on the frontier of the country at Griotuna-gard. "It was," added he, "a great folly of me that I left my shield and stone club at home. Had I my arms with me, we would instantly engage in combat: but as it is otherwise, I proclaim thee a coward, if thou slayest me unarmed." Thor, who had never before been challenged by any one, would on no account decline the meeting. When Hrungnir returned to Jötunheim, the giants, to whom it was of vital importance which of the two should gain the victory, made a man of clay nine miles high, and three in breadth; but they could find no fitting heart for him, till they took one from a mare, which did not, however, remain steady when Thor came. Hrungnir's heart was of hard stone, and triangular, like the magic sign called Hrungnir's heart. His head was likewise of stone, as was also his shield, and this he held before him, when he stood at Griotuna-gard, waiting for Thor, while his weapon, a formidable whetstone, or stone club, rested on his shoulder. At his side stood the man of clay, who was named Möckurkalfi, who was excessively terrified at the sight of Thor. Thor went to the combat attended by Thialfi, who running to the spot where Hrungnir was standing, exclaimed, "Thou art standing very heedlessly, giant! Thou holdest the shield before thee, but Thor has observed thee, and will go down

into the earth, that he may attack thee from beneath." On receiving this information, Hrungnir placed the shield under his feet, stood upon it, and grasped his club with both hands. He then saw lightning, and heard a loud crash of thunder, and was sensible of Thor's divine power, who was advancing in all his strength, and had cast his hammer from a distance. Hrungnir raising his club with both hands, hurled it against the hammer: the two met in the air, and the club was dashed in pieces, of which one portion fell on the earth, whence come all the whetstone mountains; while another fragment struck Thor on the head, causing him to fall on the earth. But Miölnir struck Hrungnir on the head, and crushed his skull: he fell forwards over Thor, so that his foot lay on Thor's neck. Thialfi fought with Möckurkalfi, who fell with little honour. Thialfi then went to Thor, and endeavoured to take Hrungnir's foot from his neck, but was unable to move it. All the Æsir came, when they heard that Thor had fallen, but they were equally powerless. At length came Magni, a son of Thor and Jarnsaxa, who, although he was only three days old[1], cast Hrungnir's foot from his father's neck, and got from Thor in reward the horse Gullfaxi, which Odin took amiss, saying that so good a horse ought not to have been given to a giantess's son, but rather to himself. Thor went home to Thrudvang, but the stone remained fixed in his forehead. Then came a Väla (Völva) or prophetess, named Groa, the wife of Örvandil (Örvald), who sang incantations (galldrar) over him, so that the stone was loosed. In recompense, Thor would gladden her with the tidings that he had come from the north over Elivâgar, and in an iron basket, had borne Örvandil from Jötunheim; in token of which he related to her how one of Örvandil's toes had protruded from the basket, and got

[1] Vali, in like manner, when only one day old, avenged the death of Baldur on Höd. See hereafter.

frost-bitten, and that he (Thor) had broken it off, and cast it up to heaven, and formed of it the star called Örvandil's toe. When Thor further informed her that Örvandil would soon return home, she was so overjoyed that she forgot to continue her incantations, so that the stone was not extracted, but still remains in Thor's forehead[1]. No one should, therefore, cast a whetstone across the floor, for then the stone in Thor's head is moved[2].

Of Baldur's Death and Loki's Punishment.—The good Baldur had been troubled with sad and painful dreams that his life was in peril. The gods were exceedingly distressed, and resolved to pray for Baldur's security against all possible danger; and his mother Frigg exacted an oath from fire, water, iron, and all kinds of metal, stone, earth, trees, diseases, beasts, birds, and venomous snakes, that they would not injure her son. When the gods had thus, as they imagined, rendered all safe, they were accustomed, by way of sport, to let Baldur stand forth at their assembly, for all the Æsir to shoot at him with the bow, or to strike or throw stones at him, as nothing caused him any harm. This was considered a great honour shown to Baldur. Yet, notwithstanding these precautions, Odin, it appears, had misgivings that something wrong would take place, and that the Norns of happiness had secretly departed from them. To put an end to this painful state of anxiety, he resolved on a journey to the infernal abodes. He arose, placed the saddle on Sleipnir, and bent his way down to Niflhel (Niflheim), there to raise and interrogate a dead Vala, whose grave lay by the eastern gate of Hel's abode. Here he was met by the fierce dog of Hel, with bloody breast and jaws, which bayed and howled terrifically; but Odin rode on until he reached the Vala's grave. Turn-

[1] It may here be observed that the Lapps represent Thor with a flint-stone in his forehead.

[2] Skáldskap. 17. Harbarðslj. Str. 15. Lokaglepsa, Str. 61.

ing then his face to the north, he uttered those necromantic songs which have power to wake the dead, until the Vala, raising herself reluctantly from the tomb, demanded what man it was that had thus ventured to disturb her rest. In answer, Odin told her that his name was Vegtam, son of Valtam, and at the same time inquired of her, on what occasion the benches and gilded couches, which he perceived, were being prepared. She informed him, that it was in honour of Baldur, and desired to be no more questioned. Persisting in his inquiries, she goes on to tell him the whole manner of Baldur's death and the events immediately following, as they are here related; and again deprecates all further interrogation. But Odin persists, and asks, who those maidens are that do not weep for Baldur, but let their towering head-gear flaunt towards heaven[1]? Hereupon the Vala exclaims: "Thou art not Vegtam, as I before believed; rather art thou Odin, chief of men." To this Odin answers: "No Vala art thou, nor wise woman: rather art thou mother of three giants." To this insulting speech the Vala replies: "Ride home, and boast of thy feat. Never shall mortal visit me again, till Loki shall have burst his chains, and Ragnaröck be come."

When Loki, Laufey's son, saw the sport before mentioned, he was displeased that Baldur was not hurt, and in the likeness of a woman he went to Frigg in Fensalir. Frigg inquired of her whether she knew what the Æsir were doing in their assembly? She answered that they were all shooting at Baldur, but without hurting him. Frigg then said, "Neither weapon nor wood will hurt Bal-

[1] Who these maidens are we are nowhere informed, though it is evident they were not visible to mortal eyes, and that by discerning them Odin betrayed his divine nature. The lost myth concerning them must have been at variance with the story of Thökt (see hereafter) who is mentioned as the only being that would not bewail the death of Baldur.

dur: I have exacted an oath from all of them." On hearing this, the woman asked, "Have all things, then, sworn to spare Baldur?" Frigg told her in reply, that the mistletoe, a little insignificant plant, growing to the west of Valhall, was the only thing from which she had not required an oath, as it appeared to her too young to take one. Loki then departed, went and pulled up the mistletoe, and took it with him to the assembly, where all were engaged in their sport with Baldur. Höd was standing without the circle. Turning towards him, Loki asked why he did not shoot? Höd excused himself by saying that he was both blind and unarmed. "But," said Loki, "thou shouldst, nevertheless, show to Baldur the same honour as the others. Take this wand, and I will direct thee to where he is standing." Höd took the mistletoe, and cast it at Baldur: it pierced him through, and he fell dead to the earth. This was the most deplorable event that had till then happened among gods and men.

On Baldur's fall the Æsir were struck speechless, and lost all presence of mind. One looked at another, and all breathed vengeance on the author of the misdeed; but no one durst wreak his vengeance there, the place being sacred (a place of peace). When they essayed to speak, tears burst forth, so that they could not impart their sorrow to each other. But Odin was the most afflicted by this misfortune, for he saw how much the Æsir would lose by the death of Baldur.

When they had somewhat recovered themselves, Frigg asked, which of the Æsir was willing to gain her love and esteem by riding to Hel for the purpose of finding Baldur, and offering her a ransom, if she would allow him to return to Asgard. Hermod, Odin's active son and follower, undertook the journey; Sleipnir was led forth, Hermod mounted and galloped away.

The Æsir conveyed Baldur's corpse to the sea-shore;

but his ship named Hringhorni (which was the largest of all ships), on which they were to burn the body, they were unable to get afloat; whereupon a message was sent to Jötunheim, to the giantess Hyrrockin, who came riding on a wolf, with a viper for a rein. Dismounting from her palfrey, which four doughty champions (berserkir), called by Odin to take charge of it, could hold only by casting it on the earth, she went to the prow, and sent the ship forth with such force, that fire sprang from the rollers placed under it, and the whole earth trembled. At this Thor was incensed, and seized his hammer to cleave her head; but all the other gods interceded for her. Baldur's corpse was then borne out on the ship. His wife Nanna, the daughter of Nep, grieved so intensely that her heart burst, and her body was laid on the pile with that of her beloved Baldur. The pile was then kindled: Thor was present and consecrated it with his hammer, and kicked the dwarf Litur, who was running before his feet, into the fire. At this funeral many people were present: Odin with Frigg and his ravens and the Valkyriur, Frey in his chariot drawn by the hog Gullinborsti or Slidrugtanni, Heimdall on his horse Gulltopp, Freyia with her cats, besides a great multitude of frost-giants and mountain-giants. Odin laid his ring Draupnir on the pile, from which afterwards, every ninth night, there dropt eight rings of equal weight. Baldur's horse was also cast on the pile with all his housings.

Hermod, we are told, rode nine nights and days through dark and deep valleys, until he reached the river Giöll, where he crossed over the bridge, which is paved with shining gold. The maiden Modgud (Móþguþr), who guards it, inquired his name and race, and said, that the day before five troops of dead had ridden over the bridge, but that it did not resound so loudly as under him alone: "Nor," added she, "hast thou the hue of the dead. Why

then dost thou ride on the way to Hel?" Hermod answered, "I am riding to Hel to seek Baldur: hast thou seen aught of him on this road?" She answered, that Baldur had ridden over the bridge, and showed him the way that led downwards and northwards to Hel. Hermod rode on until he came to the barred enclosure which surrounds Hel's abode. Here he dismounted, tightened the saddle-girth, and having remounted, clapped spurs to his horse and cleared the enclosure. Thence he rode straight to the hall, where he saw his brother Baldur sitting in the place of honour. He remained there that night. The next morning, he besought of Hel that Baldur might ride home with him, and represented to her the grief of the Æsir for his loss. Hel answered, that it would now appear whether Baldur were really so beloved as was said; for if everything in the world, living and lifeless, bewailed him, he should return to the Æsir; if not, he should continue with her. Hermod rose up, Baldur followed him out of the hall, took the ring Draupnir, and sent it to Odin as a remembrance; and Nanna sent her veil with other presents to Frigg, and to Fulla her ring. Hermod returned to Asgard, and related what he had seen and heard.

Thereupon the Æsir sent messages over the whole world, praying all things to weep for Baldur, and thereby release him from Hel. And all did so: men and beasts, earth and stones, wood and all metals. But as the messengers were returning, they found in a cavern a giantess named Thökt, who, on their beseeching her to weep for Baldur, answered,—

> "Yes, Thökt will wail,
> weep with dry tears,
> for Baldur's death;
> breathes he or dies,
> it boots me not:
> let him bide with Hel."

Baldur's death was avenged by Odin's son Vali, who,

though only one day old, unwashed and uncombed, slew Höd[1].

Thökt, it was supposed, was Loki, who had thus not only caused the death of Baldur, but also prevented his release from Hel. To escape from the vengeance of the gods, he concealed himself in a mountain, where he built a house with four doors, that he might see on all sides. But in the day-time he often transformed himself into a salmon, and hid himself in the waterfall called Franangur's fors. He was one day sitting in his house twisting flax and yarn, and forming meshes, like the nets of later times, with a fire burning before him, when he perceived that the Æsir were not far off; for Odin had spied out his retreat from Hlidskialf. On the approach of the Æsir, he threw the net-work into the fire, and sprang into the river. Kvasir, the wisest of the Æsir, was the first that entered, who, on seeing the ashes of the net-work on the fire, concluded that it must be for the purpose of catching fish. On mentioning this to the Æsir, they took hemp, made a net after what they had seen on the ashes, and cast it into the water-fall; Thor holding it at one end, and all the Æsir drawing it at the other. But Loki went to a distance, and placed himself between two stones, so that the net passed over him; but they were aware that something living had touched it. They then cast it out a second time, having tied to it something heavy, so that nothing could slip from under it; but Loki went on farther, and perceiving that he was near the sea, he sprang over the net up into the water-fall. The Æsir having now ascertained where he was, returned to the waterfall, and divided themselves into two parties, Thor wading in the middle of the river towards the sea. Loki had now the alternative, either, at the risk of his life, to swim out to sea, or again to leap over the net. With the greatest

[1] Gylf. 49. Vegtamskviða. Völuspá, Str. 36–38. Hyndlulj. Str. 28.

promptitude he tried the latter chance, when Thor grasped him, but he slipt in his hand, and it was by the tail only that Thor could secure him. To this circumstance it is owing that the salmon has so pointed a tail.

When the gods had thus captured Loki, they brought him to a cave, raised up three fragments of rock, and bored holes through them. They then took his sons, Vali (Ali) and Narfi (Nari). Vali they transformed into a wolf, and he tore his brother Narfi in pieces. With his entrails they bound Loki over the three stones, one being under his shoulders, another under his loins, the third under his hams; and the bands became iron. Skadi then hung a venomous snake above his head, so that the poison might drip on his face; but his wife Sigyn stands by him, and holds a cup under the dripping venom. When the cup is full, the poison falls on his face while she empties it; and he shrinks from it, so that the whole earth trembles. Thence come earthquakes. There will he lie bound until Ragnaröck[1].

Of Ragnaröck, the Twilight of the Gods, or the Destruction of the Gods and the World.—Loki lay chained under the hot spring's grove. In the iron forest east of Midgard the old giantess brought forth Fenrir's (the deep's) progeny; one of which, named Sköll, will pursue the sun to the encircling ocean; the other, Hati, Hrodvitnir's son, called also Managarm, will run before the sun, and will swallow up the moon. He will be sated with the lives of the dying. On a height will sit the giantess's watch, the dauntless Egdir (eagle), and strike his harp; over him, in the Bird-wood, will crow the light-red cock Fialar. Over the Æsir will crow the gold-combed cock that wakens heroes in Odin's hall. But a soot-red cock will crow beneath the earth in Hel's abode. Loudly will howl the dog Garm in Gnipa's cave; bonds will be

[1] Gylf. 50. Lokaglepsa, conclusion. Völuspá, Str. 39, 40.

burst, loose the wolf run forth; brothers will contend and slay each other, kindred tear kindred's bond asunder. It will go hard with the world. Great abominations there shall be: an axe-tide, a sword-tide; shields shall be cloven; a wind-tide, a wolf-tide, ere the world perishes: no man will then spare another. The tree of knowledge[1] (Miótviðr, Miötuðr) shall be burnt, Mimir's sons shall dance to the resounding Giallar-horn, Heimdall raise high his trump and blow, Odin consult Mimir's head; Yggdrasil's ash, that ancient tree, tremble but stand; from the east Hrŷm shall come driving, then shall ocean swell; Jormungand (Midgard's serpent) put on his giant-mood, and plough through the billowy deep; but glad shall the eagle scream, and with its pale beak tear corpses; Naglfar shall go forth, the keel from the east shall glide, when Muspell's sons over the ocean sail; Loki will steer it; the wolf be followed by its whole monstrous progeny, led by Byleist's brother (Loki). What now befalls the Æsir? What befalls the Elves? All Jötunheim resounds; the Æsir meet in council; the dwarfs moan before their stony doors. From the south comes Surt with flickering flames; from his sword gleams the heaven-god's sun; the stone-mountains crack, the giantesses stumble, men tread the way to Hel, and heaven is riven. Then shall come Hlin's second sorrow[2], when Odin goes with the wolf to fight, and Beli's radiant slayer against Surt. Then shall fall Frigg's dearest god. Then shall come the great victor father's son, Vidar, to fight against the deadly monster; he with his hand shall cause his sword to stand in the giant's son's heart. Then shall the glorious son of Hlodyn, Odin's son (Thor), go against the monster (Midgard's serpent), bravely shall slay it Midgard's defender. Then shall all men their home (the world) forsake. Nine feet shall go Fiörgyn's (Earth's) son from the serpent, bowed

[1] *Lit.* The middle tree. [2] Baldur's death was the first. See p. 35.

down, who feared no evil. The sun shall be darkened, earth in ocean sink, the glittering stars vanish from heaven, smoky clouds encircle the all-nourishing tree (Yggdrasil), high flames play against heaven itself[1].

Of Ragnaröck according to Snorri's Edda.—There will come a winter called Fimbul-winter, when snow will drift from every side, a hard frost prevail, and cutting winds; the sun will lose its power. Of these winters three will follow without an intervening summer. But before these, three other winters will come, during which there will be bloodshed throughout the world. Brothers will slay each other through covetousness, and no mercy will be found between parents and children. Then will great events take place. One wolf will swallow up the sun, to the great detriment of mankind; the other wolf will take the moon, and will also cause a great loss. The stars will vanish from heaven. Then will it also happen that the whole earth and the mountains tremble, that the trees will be loosed from the earth, and the mountains come toppling down, and all fetters and bonds be broken and snapt asunder. The wolf Fenrir will break loose, the sea will burst over the land, because Midgard's serpent writhes with giant rage, and strives to get on land. Then also will the ship called Naglfar be loosed, which is made of dead men's nails. It should, therefore, be borne in mind, that when any one dies with uncut nails, he much increases the materials for the construction of Naglfar, which both gods and men wish finished as late as possible[2].

[1] Gylf. 12. 51. Grimnism. Str. 39. Völuspá, Str. 32–35, 41, 42, 46–58. Vafþrúdnism. Str. 18. 53. Fafnism. Str. 14, 15.

[2] Grimm suggests that by the slow process of constructing a ship, described as the largest of all ships (see p. 38), of the parings of the nails of the dead, it is simply meant to convey an idea of the great length of time that is to elapse before the end of the world, and which the implied admonition to cut and burn the nails of the dead, is intended still further to prolong. D. M. p. 775, *note*.

In this sea-flood Naglfar will float: Hrŷm is the giant named who will steer it. The wolf Fenrir will go forth with gaping mouth: his upper jaw will touch heaven, and his nether jaw the earth: if there were room, he would gape even more widely; fire burns from his eyes and nostrils. Midgard's serpent will blow forth venom, which will infect the air and the waters. He is most terrific, and he will be by the side of the wolf. During this tumult heaven will be cloven, and Muspell's sons ride forth: Surt will ride first, and both before and after him will be burning fire. The gleam of his good sword is brighter than the sun; but as they ride over it Bifröst will break. Muspell's sons will proceed to the plain called Vigrid (Vígriþr): there will come also the wolf Fenrir and Midgard's serpent; there will Loki also have come, and Hrŷm, and with them all the frost-giants. All the friends of Hel will follow Loki, but Muspell's sons will have their own bright battle-order. Vigrid's plain is a hundred miles wide on every side.

But when these events take place, Heimdall will stand up, and blow with all his might the Giallar-horn, and rouse up every god to hold a meeting. Odin will then ride to Mimir's well, and take counsel for himself and friends. Then will the ash Yggdrasil tremble, and nothing will be free from fear in heaven and earth. The Æsir will arm, and all the Einheriar, and go forth to the plain. Odin will ride first with his golden helmet and bright corselet, and his spear Gungnir: he will encounter the wolf Fenrir. Thor will be at his side, but may not help him, as he will be fully engaged in fighting with Midgard's serpent. Frey will fight with Surt, and after a hard conflict fall. The cause of his death will be, the lack of his good sword, which he gave to Skirnir. Then will the dog Garm be loosed, which had till then been bound before Gnipa's cave: he will prove the greatest misfortune; he will fight against

Týr, and they will slay each other. Thor will gain glory from [the slaying of] Midgard's serpent; thence he will walk nine feet, and then fall dead from the venom blown on him by the serpent. The wolf will swallow Odin, and so cause his death; but immediately after, Vidar will come forth, and step on the monster's nether jaw with the foot on which he will have his formidable shoe[1]. With his hand he will seize the wolf's upper jaw, and rend his mouth asunder. Thus will the wolf be slain. Loki will enter into conflict with Heimdall, and they will slay each other. After all this, Surt will hurl fire over the earth, and burn the whole world.

After the conflagration of heaven and earth and the whole universe, there will still be many dwellings, some good some bad, though it will be best to be in Gimli, in heaven: and those who are partial to good drinking will find it in the hall called Brimir, which is also in heaven [in Okólni]. That is also a good hall which stands on the Nida-fells, made of red gold, and is called Sindri. In these halls good and upright men will dwell. In Naströnd there is a large and horrible habitation, the door of which is towards the north. It is formed of the backs of serpents, like a house built of wands, but all the serpents' heads are turned into the house, and blow forth venom, so that the venom flows through the halls, in which wade perjurers and murderers, as it is said[2]:

She saw a hall
from the sun far remote
on Naströnd stand;
northward are its doors;
through the roof opening
run venom-drops;
built is that hall
of backs of snakes;
men, forswearers

[1] See page 29.

[2] Völuspá, Str. 44.

and murderers,
through waters foul,
wading she saw,
and who the ears beguile
of others' wives.

But in Hvergelmir it is worst; there [1]

the serpent Nidhögg
sucks the dead bodies,
the wolf tears them.

There too the river Slid (Sliþr) falls from the east through poisonous valleys, filled with mud and swords [2].

Of the New World.—There will arise, a second time, an earth from ocean, in verdant beauty; waterfalls will descend, the eagle fly over that catches fish in the mountain-streams. The Æsir will meet again on Ida's plain, and of the mighty earth-encircler speak. There will they remember the great deeds of old, and the glorious gods' ancient lore. Then will they find in the grass the wondrous golden tables, which at Time's origin, the prince of gods and Fiölnir's race had possessed. Unsown fields shall then bear fruit, all evil cease. Baldur shall return; he and Höd dwell in Odin's noble hall, the heavenly god's abode. Hœnir shall there offerings receive, and two brothers' sons inhabit the spacious Vindheim. There will be a hall brighter than the sun, roofed with gold, in Gimli; there virtuous folk shall dwell, and happiness enjoy for evermore. Then will come the Mighty One to the gods' council, powerful from above, he who rules all things: he will pronounce judgements, and appease quarrels, establish peace that shall last for ever. But from beneath, from Nidafell will come flying the dusky, spotted serpent Nidhögg, bearing dead carcases on his wings [3].

In Snorri's Edda the renewal of the world is thus de-

[1] Völuspá, Str. 45. [2] Ib. Str. 42.

[3] Gylf. 17, 52, 53. Völuspá, Str. 42–45, 59–66. Vafþrúdnism. Str. 39, 45, 47, 48, 49, 51. Hyndlulj. Str. 41.

scribed. A new earth will spring up from the sea, which will be both green and fair; there will the unsown fields bring forth fruit. Vidar and Vali will be living, as if neither the sea nor Surt's fire had injured them; they will dwell on Ida's plain, where Asgard formerly stood. And thither will come the sons of Thor, Modi and Magni, and will have Miölnir with them. Next will come Baldur and Höd from Hel. They will sit and converse together, and call to remembrance their secret councils, and discourse of events long since past; of Midgard's serpent and the wolf Fenrir. Then will they find in the grass the golden tables formerly belonging to the Æsir, as it is said: "Vidar and Vali shall inhabit the house of the gods, when Surt's fire is quenched." Modi and Magni will possess Miölnir, and labour to end strife. But in a place called Hoddmimir's holt, two persons, Lif and Lifthrasir, will lie concealed during Surt's conflagration, who will feed on morning dew. From these will come so great a progeny, that the whole earth will be peopled by them. And it will seem wonderful, that the sun will have brought forth a daughter not less fair than herself. She will journey in her mother's path, as it is said: "A daughter shall the sun bring forth ere Fenrir destroys her. The maid shall ride on her mother's track, when the gods are dead[1]."

THE SAGA OF VÖLUND.[2]

Völund and his brothers, Slagfin (Slagfiðr) and Egil, were the sons of a king of the Fins. They ran on snow-

[1] Gylf. 53.

[2] The Saga of Völund or Veland (Völundr), though without claim for admission within the pale of the MYTHOLOGY OF THE ÆSIR, yet, on account of its intimate connection with that mythology, of its high antiquity, as well as of the wide-spread celebrity of its hero throughout the middle age, cannot well be omitted in a work professing to be an account of the MYTHOLOGY OF THE NORTH. I have, therefore, added it.

skates and hunted the beasts of the forest. They came to a place called Ulfdal, where they built themselves a house near a lake called Ulfsiar (Wolf-waters). One morning early they found on the bank of the lake three maidens sitting and spinning flax, with swan-plumages lying beside them. They were Valkyriur. Two of them, named Hladgun Svanhvit and Hervör Alvit, were daughters of a king named Hlödver; the third was Ölrun, the daughter of Kiar king of Valland. The brothers conducted them to their dwelling, and took them to wife, Egil obtaining Ölrun, Slagfin Svanhvit, and Völund Alvit. After having lived eight years with their husbands, the Valkyriur flew away in quest of conflicts, and did not return; whereupon Egil and Slagfin set out on their snow-skates in search of them, but Völund remained at home in Ulfdal. According to old tradition, Völund was of all men the most skilful. His hours of solitude were passed in making rings of gold and setting them with precious stones: these he hung on a line of bast. Thus did he while away the long hours, anxiously awaiting his fair consort's return.

Having received intelligence that Völund was alone in his dwelling, Nidud (Niþuðr), king of the Niarer in Sweden, sent a party of armed men thither by night, during Völund's absence at the chase, who on searching the house, found the line of rings, to the number of seven hundred, one of which they carried off. On his return, Völund proceeded to roast bear's flesh, and while the meat was at the fire, sat down on a bear-skin to count his rings. Missing one, he concluded that Alvit was returned and had taken it. In anxious expectation of seeing her enter, he at length fell asleep, and on waking found that his hands and feet were fast bound with heavy chains, and that Nidud was standing by his side, who charged him with having stolen the gold from him of which the rings were made. Völund repelled the charge, declaring that while their

wives were with them they had possessed many treasures. The ring Nidud gave to his daughter Bödvildi; but a sword, in the tempering and hardening of which Völund had exerted his utmost skill, Nidud took for himself.

Apprehensive of vengeance on the part of Völund, for the injuries he had inflicted on him, Nidud, at the suggestion of his queen, caused him to be hamstringed[1], and confined on an islet called Sævarstöd. Here he fabricated all kinds of precious things for the king, who allowed no one excepting himself to visit him. One day, however, the two young sons of Nidud, heedless of the prohibition, came to Völund's habitation, and proceeding at once to the chest in which his valuables were kept, demanded the keys. Here they feasted their eyes over the many costly ornaments of gold thus brought to view, and received from Völund the promise, that if they would return on a future day, he would make them a present of the gold they had seen, at the same time enjoining them to keep their visit a secret from all. They came accordingly, and while stooping over the contents of the chest, Völund struck off their heads, and concealed their bodies in an adjacent dunghill. The upper part of their skulls he set in silver, and presented them as drinking cups to Nidud; of their eyes he formed precious stones (pearls), which he gave to Nidud's queen; of their teeth he made breast-ornaments, which he sent to Bödvildi.

Bödvildi having broken the ring given to her by her father from Völund's collection, and fearing her father's anger,

[1] Another and, no doubt, older tradition respecting Völund is referred to by Deor the skald (Cod. Exon. p. 377), according to which Nithhád, as he is called in the A. S. poem, only bound him with a thong of sinews:

Siþþan hine Niðhád on	When that on him Nithhád
nede legde,	constraint had laid,
swoncre seono-bende.	with a tough (pliant) sinew-band.

The hamstringing will then appear to be a later improvement on the story.

took it privately to Völund, in order to have it repaired. "I will so mend it," said he, "that thou shalt appear fairer to thy father, and much better to thy mother and thyself." He then gave her beer, which so overpowered her that she fell asleep, and while in that state fell a victim to the passions of Völund. "Now," exclaimed he, "are all the sufferings save one avenged that I underwent in the forest. I wish only that I had again the use of my sinews, of which Nidud's men deprived me." Laughing he then raised himself in air, while Bödvildi in tears departed from the islet. Descending on the wall of the royal palace, Völund called aloud to Nidud, who, on inquiring what had become of his sons, was thus answered: "First thou shalt swear to me all these oaths: By board of ship, and buckler's rim, by horse's shoulder, and edge of sword, that thou wilt not harm the wife of Völund, or cause her death, be she known to you or not, or whether or not we have offspring. Go to the smithy that thou hast built, there wilt thou see the blood-stained trunks of thy young ones. I struck off their heads, and in the prison's filth laid their carcases; their skulls I set in silver, and sent them to Nidud; of their eyes I formed precious stones, and sent them to Nidud's crafty wife; of their teeth I made breast-pearls, which I sent to Bödvildi, your only daughter, who is now pregnant." Then laughing at the threats and maledictions of Nidud, Völund again raised himself on high. Thereupon Nidud summoned to his presence his daughter Bödvildi, who confessed to him all that had befallen her on the islet.

The foregoing Saga, from Sæmund's Edda, differs materially in its details from the story of 'Velint,' as given in the Vilkina Saga, the substance of which has been thus condensed by the late learned Dr. Peter Erasmus Müller, Bishop of Seeland[1].

[1] Sagabibliothek, Bd. ii. p. 154.

While King Vilkinus, on his return from an expedition to the Baltic, lay with his fleet on the coast of Russia, he went one day up into a forest, where he met with a beautiful woman, who was a mermaid [1]. In the following year she brought forth a son, who received the name of Vadi [2], and grew to a gigantic stature. His father, who had no great affection for him, nevertheless gave him twelve mansions in Seeland. Vadi had a son named Velint, who, in his ninth year, was placed by his father for instruction with a smith named Mimir in Hunaland, where he had much to endure from Sigurd Svend, who was also under the same master. This coming to the knowledge of his father in Seeland, he, at the expiration of three years, took his son away from Mimir, and placed him with two skilful dwarfs, who dwelt in the mountain of Kallova (Kullen). two years afterwards his father went to fetch him, but perished by a mountain-slip. Velint slew the dwarfs, who, being envious of his superior skill, had sought his life. He then placed himself with his tools in a hollowed tree, having a glass window in front, and committed himself to the mercy of the waves, which bore him to the coast of Jutland, where he was well received by Nidung, who at that time ruled in Thy. Here he availed himself of the opportunity of showing how greatly he excelled in curious works the king's own smith Æmilias.

It happened on a certain time that the king went forth to war with thirty thousand horse, and had proceeded five days at the head of his army, when he discovered that he had left behind him the talisman (sigursteinn) which

[1] In the German poem of the Rabenschlacht, 964, 969, she is called Frou Wâchilt.

[2] In the Scôp or Scald's Tale (Cod. Exon. 320, 1) we have "Wada (weold) Hælsingum" (Wada ruled the Helsings). Memorials of this tribe are Helsingborg, Helsingör (Elsinör), Helsingfors, Helsingland, etc. Wade's boat, Guingelot, is celebrated by Chaucer.

brought him victory. To repair his mishap, he promised to bestow his daughter and half his kingdom on him who should bring him the talisman on the following day before sunset. Velint performs the feat, but having by the way killed one of the king's men in self-defence, it affords the king a pretext for declaring him an outlaw. To wreak his vengeance, Velint disguises himself as a cook, and puts charmed herbs in the food of the princess, but she detects the treachery, and Velint is seized, hamstringed, and condemned to make ornaments in the king's court for his enemies.

At this time, by Velint's desire, his younger brother Egil came to Nidung's court. Being famed for his skill in archery, the king commanded him to shoot an apple, at a single shot, from the head of his son, a child of three years. Having performed this deed, the king, seeing that he had taken two arrows from his quiver, demanded of him for what purpose they were intended? Egil answered, "They were designed for thee, if I had hit the child." This bold answer was not taken amiss by the king.

Velint in the meantime was brooding over vengeance. One day the king's daughter came to his smithy, for the purpose of getting a broken ring mended; when Velint, availing himself of the opportunity, violated her. This crime was shortly after followed by the murder of the king's two youngest sons, whom he had enticed to his smithy. Their bones he set in costly golden vessels, which were placed on their father's table. Velint then made himself a plumage of feathers collected by his brother Egil, by means of which he flew up on the highest tower of the palace, from whence he declared all that he had done. Nidung on hearing this commanded Egil, under threats of death, to shoot his brother, and he actually struck him under the left arm, but where, as had been previously concerted between them, a bladder was placed filled with

blood, which Nidung imagined to be the blood of Velint: he, however, flew to his father's abode in Seeland. Shortly after these events Nidung died, and Velint was reconciled with his son Otwin, and married his sister, who had already borne him a son named Vidga[1].

Of Thorgerd Hörgabrud (Þorgerðr Hörgabrúðr, or Hölgabrúðr) and Irpa.—Objects of worship among the people of Halgoland, in Norway, were Thorgerd Hörgabrud and her sister Irpa. Who these were will appear from the following extract:—

"The Halgolanders had their local deities, who were but rarely worshiped by the other Scandinavians. One of these was Hâlogi (high flame), or Helgi (holy), from whom the whole district, of which he was king, derived its name of Hâloga-land, or Hölga-land[2]. He was probably identical with the Logi and Loki (fire, flame) formerly worshiped by the Fins. His daughters were Thorgerd Hörgabrud, or Hölgabrud, and Irpa, of whom the former was an object of especial veneration with Hakon Jarl, and to propitiate whom, we are informed, he sacrificed his son Erling, a child of seven years, when engaged in a doubtful battle with the pirates of Jomsborg. She consequently appeared in a raging hail-storm from the north, and the pirates imagined that they saw both her and her sister Irpa on board of the jarl's ship; an arrow flew from each of her fingers, and every arrow carried a man's death[3]. In Gudbrandsdal she and Irpa together with Thor were worshiped in a temple, which Hakon Jarl and the chieftain Gudbrand possessed in common[4]. In western Nor-

[1] The Wudga mentioned in The Scôp or Scald's Song (Cod. Exon. 326), the Vidrik Verlandsön of the Danish Kjæmpeviser. For the several extracts relating to these personages, from German and Northern sources, see W. Grimm's Deutsche Heldensage *passim*.

[2] See p. 27.

[3] Jomsv. S. edit. 1824, c. 14. Fornm. S. xi. p. 134. Olaf Tryggv. S. in Fornm. S. p. 90.

[4] Njálss. p. 89.

way she had also a temple most sumptuously constructed, in which the said Hakon Jarl paid her the most profound adoration[1]. Even in Iceland Thorgerd was worshiped in a temple at Olves-vand, and was regarded as a tutelary spirit by the chieftain Grimkell and his family[2]. Her statue is described as having gold rings on the arms[3].

THE SAGA OF THE VÖLSUNGS AND GIUKINGS, OR NIBELUNGS.

In consequence of its immediate connection with the Mythology of the Æsir, it has been deemed desirable to relate the origin of the celebrated Nibelungen Hoard or Treasure, the calamities caused by which form the subject of so many compositions, both Scandinavian and German. The following condensation of the story is chiefly by the late learned Bishop Peter Erasmus Müller[4].

There was a man named Sigi; he was descended from the gods, and was called a son of Odin. There was another man named Skadi, who had a bold and active thrall called Bredi. Sigi went out to hunt with Bredi, but in a fit of jealousy at the greater success of the thrall, he slew him. Sigi thus became an outlaw, and, conducted by Odin, went far away, and obtained some war-ships, by means of which he at length became king over Hunaland. In his old age he was slain by his wife's relations, but his son, Rerir, avenged his death on them all.

Rerir became a great warrior, but had no offspring. He and his queen prayed fervently to the gods for an heir. Their prayer was heard. Odin sent his maiden (óskmey)[5],

[1] Færeyings. 23.

[2] Saga of Hörði, i. 18. Lex. Myth. p. 981. Keyser, Nordm. Relig. p. 75.

[3] Fornm. S. ii. p. 108.

[4] Sagabibliothek, Bd. ii. p. 36.

[5] The same as a Valkyria, and probably so called from Oski, one of the names of Odin. See p. 15 and *note*, and Grimm, D. M. p. 390.

a daughter of the giant (jötun) Hrimnir, with an apple to the king. She assumed the guise of a crow (krageham), flew to a mound, on which Rerir was sitting, and let the apple fall into his bosom. The king ate of it, and his queen forthwith became pregnant, but could not bring forth. In this state she passed six years, when a wonderfully large child was cut from her womb. He was named Völsung, and kissed his mother before her death.

Völsung married the daughter of Hrimnir, by whom he had ten sons, and a daughter named Signi. Sigmund and Signi, the eldest, were twins. Signi was married to a king of Gothland, named Siggeir. At the nuptial feast there came a tall, one-eyed old man, barefooted, wrapt in a cloak, with a broad-brimmed hat, into the hall, in the middle of which stood an oak[1], whose roots passed under the floor, while its branches covered the roof. The old man struck a sword into the trunk of the tree, as a gift for any one who should draw it forth. Sigmund acquired the sword, to the mortification of Siggeir, who on his departure invites Völsung to be his guest in Gothland; but on his arrival there, attacks him with an overwhelming force, slays him, and makes all his sons prisoners.

Signi begged that her brothers might not be immediately put to death. Their feet were set fast in a large tree in the forest, and every night there came a wolf and devoured one of them, until Sigmund was the only one left. Signi caused his face to be smeared with honey, and some to be laid in his mouth, so that when the wolf came, he licked the honey, and put his tongue into Sigmund's mouth, which Sigmund seized with his teeth. The wolf kicked with so much violence that the trunk of the tree burst asunder. The wolf lost his tongue, and got his death. Sigmund fled to a cave in the forest. Signi sent

[1] This primitive style of building speaks strongly for the antiquity of the legend.

her two sons to bear him company; but finding they were not sufficiently stout and valiant, he killed them by the counsel of Signi; who then changed form with a troll-wife, and was three days in the cave with her brother, to whom she bore a son, who was named Sinfiotli. He, when ten years old, was sent to Sigmund's cave, and was bold enough to knead a dough, without caring for the numerous snakes that were in it. Sigmund then and his son turned robbers. One day they fell in with the sons of some king, who nine days in ten, through enchantment, wore the form of wolves[1]. By putting on their wolfish garbs, Sigmund and his son became wolves; but when the time came for laying them aside, they burnt them, so that they might do no more harm. They now went to Siggeir's castle, where they concealed themselves, but were discovered through two young children of Signi. These, at the instigation of Signi, were slain by Sinfiotli, who, together with Sigmund, was immediately after overpowered by Siggeir's men, and cast into a pit, to die of hunger. Just before the pit was closed, Signi came to it, and threw into it a helmet full of pork, and Sigmund's sword, by the aid of which they worked their way out. They then set the royal castle on fire. When Signi heard what had taken place, she went out and kissed them both, then went in again, glad to die with the man with whom she had so unwillingly lived.

Sigmund, who had returned to his paternal kingdom of Hunaland, married Borghild, by whom he had a son, Helgi, of whom the Norns foretold that he should become a powerful prince. Helgi went to war, together with Sinfiotli, and slew King Hunding, whence he acquired the

[1] This is the earliest trace of the werwolf superstition occurring in the traditions of the North. While Sigmund and his son slept, their wolf-skins hung close by them (Fornald. Sögur, i. 130, 131). In the Leges Eccl. of Cnut, xxvi., the werwolf is named as a known, existing being.

name of Hundingsbani, and afterwards slew several of his sons. In a forest he met with Sigrun, a daughter of King Högni, who solicited him to free her from Hodbrod, son of Granmar, to whom her father had betrothed her. Hodbrod is slain in a battle, Helgi marries Sigrun, and becomes a powerful king.

In another expedition, Sinfiotli killed a brother of Borghild, who in revenge prepared a poisonous drink, which caused his death. Sigmund bore the corpse in his arms to a narrow frith, where there was a man with a small boat, who offered to convey him across; but no sooner had Sigmund laid the corpse in the boat, than the man pushed off and vanished. After this Sigmund parted from Borghild and married Hiordis, a daughter of King Eilimi, but was attacked in his kingdom by King Lingi, who with his brothers had assembled a numerous army. Sigmund fought valiantly in the battle, until he was met by a one-eyed man, with a broad hat, and blue cloak, who held his spear against the sword of the king, which it shivered into fragments. Sigmund fell with almost the whole of his army. At night, Hiordis came to the field of battle, and asked Sigmund whether he could be healed, but he declined her kind offices, for his good fortune had forsaken him, since Odin had broken his sword, of which he requested Hiordis to collect the fragments, and give them to the son she bore under her heart, who should become the greatest of the Völsung race.

Hiordis was carried off by Alf, a son of King Hialprek of Denmark, who had just landed at the battle-place with a band of vikings. She had changed clothes with her attendant, who gave herself out as queen. But Alf's mother, suspecting the artifice, caused her son to ask, how towards the end of night they could know what hour it was, when they could not look on the heavens? The servant answered, that in her youth she had been in the habit of

drinking mead at early morn, and therefore always woke at the same hour. But Hiordis answered, that her father had given her a gold ring, which cooled her finger by night, and that was her sign. "Now," said the king, "I know which is the mistress," and expressed his intention to marry her as soon as she had given birth to her child. After the birth of Sigurd (Sigurþr), Hiordis accordingly became the wife of Hialprek.

Sigurd grew up in Hialprek's court, under the care of Regin, who instructed him in all the branches of knowledge known at that time, as chess, runes, and many languages. He also urged him to demand his father's treasure of Hialprek. Sigurd asked a horse of the king, who allowed him to choose one; and Odin, in the guise of an old man with a long beard, aided him to find out Grani, that was of Sleipnir's race. Regin would then have him go in quest of Fafnir's gold, of which he gave him the following account.

"Hreidmar had three sons, Fafnir (Fofnir,) Ottur, and Regin. Ottur could transform himself into an otter, under which form he was in the habit of catching fish in Andvari's water-fall, so called from a dwarf of that name. He was one day sitting with his eyes shut eating a salmon, when Odin, Hœnir, and Loki chanced to pass by. On seeing the otter, Loki cast a stone at it and killed it. The Æsir then skinned the otter, and came well satisfied with their prize to Hreidmar's dwelling. There they were seized, and compelled to redeem themselves with as much gold as would both fill and cover the otter's skin. To obtain the gold, Loki borrowed Rân's[1] net, cast it into the water-fall, and caught in it the dwarf Andvari, who was accustomed to fish there under the form of a pike. The dwarf was compelled to give all his gold as the price of his liberty; but on Loki taking from him his last ring, he

[1] See p. 27.

foretold that it should prove the bane of all its possessors. With this gold the Æsir enclosed the otter's skin; but on Hreidmar perceiving a hair of the beard still uncovered, Odin threw on it the ring of Andvari. Fafnir afterwards slew his father, took all the gold, and became one of the worst of serpents, and now watched over his treasure."

Sigurd then requested Regin to forge him a sword. He forged two, but their blades would not stand proof. Sigurd then brought him the fragments of Sigmund's sword, of which he forged one that could cleave an anvil and cut through floating wool. Armed with this weapon, Sigurd went forth, first to his maternal uncle Grip, who foretold him his destiny. He then sailed with a chosen army to avenge his father's death on the sons of Hunding. During a storm they were hailed by an old man, from a point of land, whom they took on board. He told them his name was Hnikar[1], together with much other matter. The storm then abated, and as he stept on shore, he vanished. Hunding's sons with a large army encountered Sigurd, but were all slain, and Sigurd returned with great honour.

Sigurd was now impatient to slay the serpent, whose lair had been pointed out to him by Regin. An old long-bearded man warned him to beware of the monster's blood. Sigurd pierces Fafnir through, who, nevertheless, holds a long conversation with his slayer, in which he answers the latter's questions relative to the Norns and Æsir, but strives in vain to dissuade him from taking the gold[2].

After the death of Fafnir, Regin, who had concealed himself, came forth, drank of Fafnir's blood, cut out his

[1] This was Odin, one of whose numerous names was Hnikar (see p. 15, *note*), under which he appears as a marine deity.

[2] On receiving the fatal wound, Fafnir demanded to know the name of his murderer, which Sigurd at first declined giving him, in the belief (as Bishop Müller supposes) then prevalent, that the words of a dying man possessed great power, when he cursed his enemy by name. See Edda Sæm. p. 186.

heart with the sword named Rithil, and requested Sigurd to roast it for him. As Sigurd touched the heart with his finger, a drop by chance lighted on his tongue, and he instantly understood the language of birds. He heard an eagle[1] tell its companion that Sigurd would act wisely, if he himself were to eat the serpent's heart. Another eagle said, that Regin would deceive him. A third, that he ought to slay Regin. A fourth, that he ought to take the serpent's gold, and ride to the wise Brynhild at Hindarfiall. All these feats Sigurd performs, and rides off with the treasure on Grani's back[2].

Sigurd now bent his course southwards to Frakland[3], and rode a long time, until he came to Hindarfiall, where he saw before him a light flaring up to the sky, and a shield-burgh, within which he found a damsel sleeping in complete armour, whose corselet seemed to have grown fast to her body. On Sigurd ripping up the corselet with his sword, the maiden awoke, and said that she was a Valkyria and named Brynhild[4], that Odin had condemned her to that state of sleep by pricking her with a sleep-thorn[5], because, contrary to his will, she had aided king Agnar (or Audbrod) in war, and slain king Hialmgunnar.

Sigurd begged her to give him some instruction, and she taught him the power of runes, and gave him lessons

[1] The word igþa signifies the female eagle, though it may also signify *swallow, owl, partridge.*

[2] Among which were the famed Œgir-hiálm, which Fafnir was wont to wear while brooding over the treasure, a golden corselet, and the sword Hrotti.

[3] That is Frankenland, the land of the Franks, Franconia.

[4] According to the Brynhildar-kviða I., she was named Sigurdrífa, another name, it is said, of Brynhild. From this passage it appears that Odin received mortals of royal race into his band of Valkyriur.

[5] Svefn-þorn, *spina soporifera.* A superstition not yet wholly extinct in Denmark and Iceland. It was supposed that a person could not be wakened out of this sleep as long as the thorn lay on his body or remained sticking in his clothes.

for his conduct in life. They engaged on oath to marry each other, and Sigurd took his departure. His shield blazed with the red gold, on it was depicted a dragon, dark brown above, and bright red beneath, a memorial of the monster he had slain, which the Værings call Fafnir. Sigurd's hair was brown, and fell in long locks, his beard short and thick; few could look on his piercing eyes. He was so tall that, when girded with his sword Gram, which was seven spans long, he went through a ripe rye field, the knob of his sword-sheath still stood forth. When all the stoutest warriors and greatest captains are spoken of, he is mentioned the first, and his name is current in all languages.

Sigurd rode on until he came to a spacious mansion, the rich lord of which was named Heimir. He was married to a sister of Brynhild, named Bekhild (Bænkhild). Sigurd was received with pomp, and lived there a considerable time in great honour. Brynhild was also there on a visit to her relations, and employed herself with embroidering in gold the exploits of Sigurd—the slaying of the serpent and carrying off the gold.

It chanced one day that Sigurd's falcon flew and perched on the window of a high tower. On going in pursuit of it, Sigurd discovered Brynhild at her work. Hereupon he became thoughtful, and imparted to Heimir's son, Alswith, what a beautiful woman he had seen embroidering his deeds. Alswith told him that it was Brynhild, Budli's daughter; whereupon Sigurd observed, that only a few days before he had learned that she was the most beautiful woman in the world, and expressed his resolution to visit her, although Alswith informed him that she would never endure a husband, but that her thoughts were solely bent on warfare[1].

[1] According to this account, Sigurd appears now to have seen Brynhild for the first time, which is completely at variance with what we have just

She received him with great state and friendliness. When she presented to him the golden cup with wine, he seized her hand, and placed her by him, clasped her round the neck, kissed her, and said, "No woman born is fairer than thou." She answered, "It is not prudent to place one's happiness in the power of women: they too often break their vows." "The happy day will come," said Sigurd, "that we may enjoy each other." Brynhild answered that such was not the will of fate, for that she was a shield-maid. Sigurd replied, "It were best for both that we lived together. The pain I now feel is harder to endure than sharp weapons." Brynhild said, "I shall go to the battle-field, and thou wilt marry Gudrun, king Giuki's daughter." "No king's daughter," said Sigurd, "shall seduce me; nor am I given to fickleness. I swear to thee by the gods, that I will have thee to wife, and none other." Brynhild also expressed herself in words to the same purpose. Sigurd expressed his gratitude, gave her Andvari's ring, swore anew, and went away to his people.

There was a king named Giuki, who dwelt south of the Rhine. He had three sons, Gunnar, Högni, and Guttorm. Gudrun (Guðrún) his daughter was fairest of maidens. Her mother was the noted sorceress Grimhild. Gudrun dreamed that a most beautiful falcon came to her hand; she thereupon became thoughtful: it was said to betoken some king's son. Gudrun betook herself to the wise Brynhild, sister to the wicked king Atli, that she might hear her interpretation. Gudrun was, however, reserved towards her, and simply inquired the names of the mightiest kings and their exploits. Brynhild named Haki and Hagbard, but Gudrun thought they were too inactive

read of their previous meeting and mutual vows. Either Sigurdrífa is a different personage from Brynhild, or the story of Sigurd's first interview with her is a fragment of some lost version of the legend, varying considerably from what is extant in the Eddas and the Volsunga Saga.

in avenging their sister, who had been carried off by Sigar. Gudrun then named her own brothers, but Brynhild said that they had not yet proved themselves; but that Sigurd Fafnisbana was the flower of all heroes. Gudrun then told her that she had dreamed of a beautiful hart, of which all were in chase, but which she alone overtook, and that Brynhild killed it in her lap. Brynhild then recounted to her her whole future destiny, and Gudrun returned to Giuki's palace.

Thither shortly after came Sigurd, riding on Grani with all his treasure. Grimhild conceived such an attachment to him that she was desirous he should marry her daughter; and therefore gave him a charmed potion, which caused him to forget Brynhild, to swear fellowship with Gunnar and Högni, and to marry Gudrun[1].

When Sigurd and the sons of Giuki had traversed far and wide over the country, and performed many great feats, Grimhild persuaded her son Gunnar to woo Brynhild, Budli's daughter, who was still dwelling with Heimir in Hlindal. Her maiden-bower was encircled with glowing fire, and she would marry that man only who should ride through it. The princes rode thither, but Gunnar could not force his horse over the fire. He and Sigurd then exchanged forms, and the latter on Grani traversed the flames and made love to Brynhild as though he were Gunnar, son of Giuki. Brynhild, though sore against her will, was obliged to fulfil her engagement. For three nights they slept in the same bed, but Sigurd laid the sword Gram between them[2]. He took Andvari's ring from her hand, and gave her in return one from Fafnir's treasure. After

[1] Sigurd gave her a piece of Fafnir's heart to eat, which rendered her more obdurate than before.

[2] Remains of this custom are, it is said, still to be traced in some of the Danish isles, South Jutland, Holstein and Norway. Such nights were called Prövenætter, Probenächte, *nights of trial* or *proof*.

these events, Sigurd rode back to his comrades, and resumed his own form.

Brynhild related to her foster-father, Heimir, how Gunnar had ridden through the fire and made love to her, and how certain she till then had felt that Sigurd alone, to whom she had vowed eternal constancy, could have accomplished the adventure. Then commending Aslaug, her daughter by Sigurd, to the guardianship of Heimir, she returned to her father, Budli, and the celebration of her marriage with Gunnar lasted many days. Not until it was over did Sigurd call to memory the oaths he had sworn to Brynhild, but let all pass off quietly.

It happened one day that Brynhild and Gudrun went to the Rhine to bathe. On Brynhild going further out in the water, Gudrun asked the cause. She answered, "Neither here nor anywhere else will I stand by side of thee. My father was more powerful than thine, my husband has performed greater feats than thine, and has ridden through the glowing fire. Thy husband was king Hialprek's thrall." Hereupon Gudrun gave her to understand that it was *her* husband that had ridden through the fire, had passed three nights with her, had taken Andvari's ring from her, which she herself then wore. At this intelligence Brynhild grew deadly pale, and uttered not a word. The following day the two queens began jarring again about their husbands' superiority, when Gudrun declared that what had been sung of Sigurd's victory over the serpent was of greater worth than all king Gunnar's realm. Brynhild now went and lay down as one dead. When Gunnar came to her she upbraided him with his and his mother's deceit, and attempted his life. Högni caused her to be bound, but Gunnar ordered her to be loosed. She would engage in no occupation, but filled the palace with loud lamentations. Gudrun sent Sigurd to her, to whom she poured forth all her grief, and said that she hated

Gunnar, and wished Sigurd were murdered. On the latter saying it had afflicted him that she was not his wife, and that he would even then marry her, she answered that she would rather die than be faithless to Gunnar. She had sworn to marry the man that should ride over the fire: that oath she would keep sacred or die. Sigurd said, "Sooner than thou shalt die I will forsake Gudrun." His sides heaved so violently that his corselet burst asunder. "I will neither have thee nor any other man," said Brynhild; and Sigurd took his departure.

Brynhild threatened to leave Gunnar, if he did not murder Sigurd and his child. Gunnar was bewildered. Högni dissuaded him from compliance with the will of Brynhild. At length Gunnar said there was no alternative, as Sigurd had dishonoured Brynhild[1]. They would, therefore, instigate their brother Guttorm (who had not sworn brotherly fellowship with Sigurd) to do the deed. For this purpose they gave him a dish composed of wolf's and serpent's flesh; after which, being urged on by Brynhild, Guttorm stabbed Sigurd while slumbering[2], but was himself cut asunder by the sword Gram, which his victim hurled after him. Gudrun mourned over her murdered consort, but Brynhild laughed at her grief. Gunnar and Högni reproached her for her malignity, but she set before

[1] It would seem that Brynhild had feigned the story of her own dishonour, for the purpose of instigating the Giukings to murder Sigurd, as she is afterwards made to say, "We slept together in the same bed as if he had been my own brother. Neither of us during eight nights laid a hand on the other." At the same time, however, we read that Brynhild, when on the eve of her marriage with Gunnar, committed Aslaug, her daughter by Sigurd, to the care of her foster-father Heimir. Aslaug was afterwards married to Ragnar Lodbrok, whence it seems not improbable that the latter story was invented for the purpose of connecting the line of Danish kings with Sigurd and Brynhild. See Edda Sæm., pp. 229, 203.

[2] According to other narratives, Sigurd was murdered on his way to the public assembly (þing). According to the German tradition, he was slain in a forest. See Edda Sæm., p. 210.

them their baseness towards Sigurd, and their deceit towards herself; nor did she suffer herself to be appeased by Gunnar's caresses, but after having given away her gold, stabbed herself. She now again foretold the fate of Gudrun, and commanded her body to be burnt by the side of Sigurd's, on the same pile, enclosed with hangings and shields, and the sword Gram between them[1], together with those of his three years' old son, whom she herself had murdered, and of Guttorm; on her other side, her own attendants, two at her head and two at her feet, besides two hawks. She then mounted the pile.

Gudrun mourned for the death of Sigurd; Grani, his horse, hung down his head in sorrow. Gudrun fled to the forest, and came at length to king Hialprek in Denmark, where with Thora, the daughter of Hakon, she embroidered the exploits of heroes[2]. After the death of Sigurd, Gunnar and Högni possessed themselves of his whole treasure, which was called Fafnir's inheritance. Enmity now ensued between the Giukings and Atli, who accused them of having caused the death of his sister Brynhild. As a peace-offering, it was agreed that Gudrun should be given in marriage to Atli. Grimhild, having discovered her retreat, rode thither, accompanied by her sons and a numerous retinue of Langobards, Franks and Saxons. Gudrun would not listen to them. Grimhild then gave her an oblivious potion[3], and thereby gained her consent to a union

[1] In the prose introduction to the Helreiδ Brynhildar, it is said there were two piles. Brynhild's corpse was laid on the pile in a chariot hung with silken curtains. Asuitus, a prince mentioned by Saxo (edit. Müller. p. 244), was buried with a dog and a horse.

[2] Also Danish swans, southern palaces, noble sports, kings' retainers, red shields, Sigmund's ships with gilded and sculptured prows. Goδ. Harmr, Str. 13–16.

[3] "A drink cold and bitter..... mingled with Urd's power, with chilling water and blood of Sôn. In that horn were characters of all kinds cut, red of hue, which I could not interpret." Ib. Str. 21, 22. Whether the

with Atli, from which she foreboded evil. They travelled during four days on horseback, but the women were placed in carriages; then four days in a ship, and again four days by land, ere they came to Atli's residence, where the nuptials were solemnized with great splendour: but Gudrun never smiled on Atli.

One night Atli dreamed ill-boding dreams, but Gudrun interpreted them favourably. It then occurred to his remembrance that the Giukings had kept possession of all Sigurd's gold, and he therefore sent Vingi to invite them to a banquet; but Gudrun, who had noticed what had passed between him and his messenger, cut runes and sent them to her brothers, together with a gold ring, in which some wolf's hair was twined. Vingi altered the runes before he stept on shore. He made great promises to the Giukings, if they would visit King Atli. Gunnar had but little inclination for the journey, and Högni was opposed to it; but being overcome by wine at the protracted feast given to Vingi, Gunnar was led to pledge himself to the journey.

In the mean time, Kostbera, Högni's wife, had read the runes sent by Gudrun, and discovered that they had been falsified. She strove to dissuade her husband from the journey, and related to him her terrific dreams, which he interpreted in a contrary sense. Glaumvör also, Gunnar's queen, dreamed of treachery, but Gunnar said that no one could avert his destiny. Though all would dissuade them, they, nevertheless, stept on board with Vingi, attended by a few only of their own people. They rowed so lustily that half the keel burst and their oars were broken. They then travelled a while through a gloomy forest, where they saw a powerful army, notwithstanding which they opened

norn Urd is here alluded to is extremely doubtful, and almost equally so is the allusion to Sôn, though the vessel containing the skaldic or poetic mead may be intended, for which see p. 40.

the gate of the fastness and rode in. Vingi now gave them to understand that they had been beguiled, whereupon they slew him with their maces.

King Atli now commanded his people to seize them in the hall. On hearing the clash of arms, Gudrun cast her mantle aside, entered the hall, and having embraced her brothers, endeavoured to mediate, but in vain. She then put on a corselet, took a sword, and shared in the conflict like the stoutest champion. The battle lasted long, Atli lost many of his warriors. At length, the two brothers alone survived of their whole party: they were overpowered and bound. Atli commanded Högni's heart to be cut out, though his counsellors would have taken that of the thrall Hialli; but as he cried out when they were about to lay hands on him, Högni said it was a game he recked little of, so the thrall for the moment escaped. Gunnar and Högni were set in chains. It was Atli's wish that Gunnar should save his life by disclosing where the gold was deposited; but he answered, "Sooner would I see my brother Högni's bloody heart." They then again seized on the thrall, cut out his heart, and laid it before Gunnar. "This," said he, "is the heart of a coward, unlike the brave Högni's; for even now it trembles, though less by half than when in its owner's breast." They then cut out the heart of Högni, who laughed under the process. On seeing that it did not tremble, Gunnar recognised it for Högni's, and said that now he alone knew where the gold was hidden, and that the Rhine should possess it rather than his enemies wear it on their fingers. Gunnar was then confined, with his hands bound, in a yard filled with serpents. Gudrun sent him a harp, which he played with his feet, so that all the serpents were lulled to sleep save one viper, which fixed itself on him and stung him to the heart[1].

[1] This was Atli's mother so transformed. See Oddrúnar Grátr, Str. 30.

Elated with his victory, Atli scoffed at Gudrun; but on perceiving her exasperation, he sought to appease her. She removed his doubts and suspicions by her assumed gentleness, and a sumptuous grave-ale[1] was ordered in memory of the fallen. Gudrun now took her two young sons, who were at play, and cut their throats. When Atli inquired for his children, she answered that their skulls, set in gold and silver, had been turned into drinking cups, that in his wine he had drunk their blood, and eaten their hearts in his food. Högni's son, Niflung, thirsting to avenge his father, consulted with Gudrun; and when Atli, after his repast, lay down to sleep, they slew him[2]. Gudrun then caused the palace to be surrounded with fire, and burnt all Atli's people.

Gudrun then plunged into the sea, but the waves bore her to land, and she came to the city of the great king Jonakur, who married her, and had by her three sons, Hamdir (Hamþir), Sörli, and Erp (Erpr). Svanhild, Gudrun's daughter by Sigurd, was also bred up there. The mighty king Jormunrek, having heard of Svanhild's beauty, sent his son Randve, together with his counsellor Biki, to woo her for him. She was married to him against

[1] Old Norse Erfiöl, Dan. Arve-öl, Welsh Aruyl. A funeral feast held in honour of the dead by the heir (O. N. arfr, Ger. Erbe). It was believed that the dead were present at their grave-ale. In the Eyrbyggiasaga a story connected with this superstition will be found, which being too long for insertion here, the reader is referred to Sir Walter Scott's extract in the 'Illustrations of Northern Antiquities,' p. 507, and in Bohn's edition of Mallet's 'Northern Antiquities,' p. 536.

[2] See the account of Atli's death and funeral in Jornandes, ch xxv. The relation here given accords in some measure with what we find in the Byzantine writers, viz. Marcellinus Comes writes, *Attilam noctu mulieris manu cultroque confossum.* According to others, *nimio vino et somno gravatus, et copioso sanguinis profluvio obundatus, inventus est mortuus in lecto, accubans mulieri, quæ de ejus nece suspecta habita est.* John Malala says that a certain armour-bearer slew Attila. See Edda Sæmundar, edit. Copenhagen, ii. 954.

the will of Gudrun. As they were sailing home, Biki instigated Randve to speak in terms of tenderness to Svanhild, saying it was more suitable for a young man than for the old king to possess so fair a maiden. After their arrival Biki told the king that Svanhild was Randve's mistress; whereupon the king ordered Randve to be hanged. When led to the gallows he plucked some feathers from a hawk and sent them to his father, who understanding them to signify that he had parted with his honour, commanded his son to be taken down; but Biki had so contrived that he was already dead. At Biki's instigation, Svanhild was also condemned to an ignominious death. She was placed bound at the city gate, to be trampled to death by horses. When she turned her eyes on them, they refused to tread on her; but Biki caused a sack to be drawn over her head, and thus terminated her existence[1].

Gudrun urged her sons, Sörli and Hamdir, to avenge their sister, and poured forth loud lamentations over her unhappy fate. The sons departed cased in mail that no steel could penetrate, but their mother warned them to beware of stone. On the way they met their brother Erp, whom they asked what help he would afford? He answered, he would so help them as the hand helps the hand and the foot the foot. At this they were dissatisfied

[1] According to Saxo (edit. Müller, 414), Jarmericus was a king of Denmark and Sweden. His story differs widely from that in the Eddas and Volsunga Saga. Of Svanhild (whom he calls Swavilda) he says, "Hanc tantæ fuisse pulchritudinis fama est, ut ipsis quoque jumentis horrori foret artus eximio decore præditos sordidis lacerare vestigiis. Quo argumento rex innocentiam conjugis declarari conjectans, accedente erroris pœnitentia, falso notatam festinat absolvere. Advolat interea Bicco, qui supinam jumenta diris deturbare carminibus nec nisi pronam obteri posse firmaret. Quippe eam formæ suæ beneficio servatam sciebat. In hunc modum collocatum reginæ corpus adactus jumentorum grex crebris alte vestigiis fodit. Hic Swavildæ exitus fuit."

and slew him. Shortly after Hamdir stumbled, and, supporting himself by his hand, exclaimed, "Erp said truly; I should have fallen, had I not supported myself by my hand." They had proceeded but a few steps further when Sörli stumbled with one foot; "I should have fallen," said he, "had I not stood on both." When they came to Jörmunrek they immediately assailed him. Hamdir cut off his hands, Sörli his feet. Hamdir said, "His head would also have been smitten off, had Erp been with us." Against Jörmunrek's men, who now attacked them, they fought valiantly, their armour being impenetrable to steel, until an old man with one eye came and counselled the men to stone them, and thus caused their destruction[1].

Of Ragnar and Thora[2].—Wide-spread over all the North was the story of Jarl Heraud of Gothland's youthful daughter, Thora, though more generally known by the appellation of 'Borgar-hjort' (the Hind of the Castle), which was bestowed on her because, unlike the bold Amazons (shield-maidens) of that age, she rather resembled a tender, timid hind; and being at the same time exquisitely fair and amiable, her father placed her in a strong castle, instead of a maiden-bower. By some it is related that her castle was guarded by a warrior named Orm, but according to the Saga: "Heraud once gave his daughter a dragon in a little box, in which it lay coiled up, and under it placed gold. The serpent grew, and with it the gold, so that it was found necessary to remove it out of the castle. At length it became a formidable monster, encircling the whole castle, so that no one could enter save such as gave it food." Hereupon the jarl held a council,

[1] In the battle of Bråvalla, the Danish king, Harald Hildetan, is said to have been slain by Odin, under the form of Harald's own general. See Gräter's Suhm, ii. 284; Saxo, p. 390.

[2] Not having either Ragnar Lodbrok's Saga or the Volsunga-Saga at command, the editor has taken these traditions from Afzelius' Sago-Häfder and Müller's Sagabibliothek.

and promised that whosoever should slay the monster should have his daughter to wife. Ragnar, son of king Sigurd of Sweden, who won the famous battle of Brâvalla, having heard of this, caused five woollen cloaks and hose to be made, and boiled in pitch[1]. He then encountered the dragon, or, as it is also related, the *bear*, that guarded fair Borgar-hjort's dwelling, which after much peril and fatigue he overcame. Lodbrok left his spear sticking in the dragon's back, but took the shaft in his hand, with which he went up to the castle, to the beautiful Thora, whom he thus addressed:—

> My youthful life I 've ventured,
> My age of fifteen years;
> The hateful worm I 've slaughter'd
> For thee, thou beauteous maid.

He then went before the jarl, and demanded the fulfilment of his promise, proving himself the liberator of his daughter by the shaft, which he held in his hand, belonging to the spear remaining in the dragon's body. It now appeared that he was the young King Ragnar, son of Sigurd. Their marriage was solemnized in a manner befitting their rank. By his wife, Thora Borgar-hjort, Ragnar had two sons, Eric and Agnar; but he did not long enjoy his happiness: Thora died, and Ragnar, leaving his states under the government of his sons and certain wise men, again betook himself to a roving life on the ocean, that in the society of his vikings he might drown or mitigate his sorrow for the loss of one whom he had so tenderly loved.

Of Ragnar and Aslaug.—When Heimir of Hlindal[2] was informed of the death of Sigurd and Brynhild, and that

[1] His garb was singular, and gave him a ferocious appearance: from his sailor's breeches, made of wild beasts' skins, he acquired the surname of *Lodbrok*, from lód (*shagginess*), and brók (*breeches*).

[2] See p. 98.

it was intended to destroy their daughter, who had been reared by him, he caused a large harp to be made, in which he concealed the child together with many jewels, and wandered forth towards the north. He gave her an onion to taste, which has the property of sustaining life for a considerable time. Heimir is described as of a gigantic, majestic figure, though his garments but ill accorded with his mien, being those of a beggar or beadsman, while his manners and the melodious tones of his harp proved him to be something widely different. Whenever he came to a lonely spot in wood or field, he would take the child out to divert itself; but if it cried within the harp, when he was in the company of others, or in any house, he would play and sing, until the little one was appeased and silent.

Heimir with his harp came late one evening to a little, lonely dwelling in Norway, called Spangarhede[1], in which lived an old man named Aki and his wife Grima. The crone was sitting alone, and could hardly be induced to kindle a fire on the hearth, that Heimir might warm himself. Her eyes were constantly fixed on the harp, in consequence of a piece of a costly garment that protruded from it; but her suspicion rose still higher when, from under the fringes of the harper's coat, she observed, when he stretched out his arms towards the fire, a bright, gold armlet. Heimir was then shown to a chamber, where, wearied with his journey, he soon fell into a profound sleep. At night the peasant returned. Wearied with the toils of the day, he was displeased at not finding his supper ready, and bitterly complained of the poor man's lot. Hereupon the old woman said to him that in that very

[1] A tongue of land near Lindesnæs, where the names still exist of Krakebæk and Guldvig, which, as the people say, are so called after the king's daughter that was concealed in a golden harp. Krakumál, edit. Rafn. Forord, p. 1.

moment he might better his condition for the rest of his life, if he would murder the stranger, who, as she had seen, had much gold and many precious things in his harp. At first the old man shrank from the perpetration of so base a deed, but was finally induced to murder Heimir in his sleep. When on opening the harp the little Aslaug came forth, they were terrified and would no doubt have murdered her, had not her prepossessing countenance awakened their conscience; but to prevent suspicion, they clothed her, as if she had been their own, in coarse garments, and called her Kraka. Years rolled on, and Kraka grew up and was distinguished for her understanding and beauty. The greater part of her time was passed in the woods, where she tended her foster-father's cattle. Of her descent she retained a lively remembrance from what at various times had been told her by Heimir; though with her foster-parents she pretended to be dumb, never uttering a syllable.

One evening Ragnar entered the port near Spangarhede, and sent some of his crew on shore to bake bread. When they came back, it was found that the bread was burnt and spoiled. They excused themselves to the king by saying that they had been quite bewildered by a country lass, named Kraka, who was so beautiful that they could not turn their eyes away from her: they thought, indeed, that she was quite as fair as Thora Borgar-hjort. They further related much of her excellent understanding and wit. Ragnar was now desirous of testing these accounts, and sent an order that Kraka should come to him in his ship, but not alone, nor yet in company with any one; not clad, yet not without clothing; not fasting, nor yet without having eaten. All this she accomplished, though not until she had received the king's assurance of a safe-conduct both coming and going. She came clad in a net, with her thick, flowing hair spread over her like a mantle;

she was attended only by a dog, and had tasted an onion, but eaten nothing. The king was no less astonished at her wit and understanding than at her beauty. He preferred a prayer to Odin, that she might be inspired with such love for him as at once to yield to his wishes. But Kraka prized her honour too highly and spurned his suit. He tried to prevail on her with the gift of an embroidered kirtle that had belonged to his deceased queen, saying:—

Art thou skill'd in such?
Wilt thou accept
This kirtle silver-wrought?
Well would become thee
The garment once
Own'd by fair Borgar-hjort.
Her lily hands
Wove the curious texture.
To me, chief of heroes,
Faithful she was till death.

Kraka answered:—

I may not take
The kirtle silver-wrought,
Which Borgar-hjort once own'd.
I am call'd Kraka,
Coal-black in vadmel[1];
For I must ever traverse stones
And tend the goats
On the sea-shore.

Astonished at what he heard and saw, the king would now, by promises of marriage, persuade her to stay the night with him; but as she was inexorable, he was too honourable to break the promise he had given her. Finally, however, Kraka agreed that if the king should return in the same frame of mind of making her his queen, she would be ready to accompany him. After some time the king returned, when Kraka, bidding her foster-parents

[1] A coarse woollen stuff made in Norway and Iceland.

farewell, accompanied him to his castle, where their marriage was solemnized with all royal pomp.

It once happened that Ragnar visited his friend, King Östen, at Upsala. In the evening Östen's young daughter went round the hall presenting mead and wine to Ragnar and his men. The king was smitten with the beauty of the young princess, and his followers represented to him how much more befitting it would be for him to possess the fair daughter of a royal house than Kraka, the daughter of a peasant. It was then agreed on by both kings that Ragnar should return home, dismiss Kraka, and come back and marry the daughter of Östen. When this came to the knowledge of Kraka, she disclosed to the king her real name of Aslaug, and that she was the daughter of King Sigurd and Brynhild, and the last descendant of the renowned race of the Völsungs; how that Heimir, after the mournful fate of her parents, had fled with her from their enemies and concealed her in his harp, until he was murdered by Aki at Spangarhede, from which time she had borne the name of Kraka. Awakened from his dream by this narrative, and touched by her proved affection, Ragnar returned no more to Upsala. All friendship with King Östen was now at an end, and from that time Aslaug became fierce and vindictive, like all of her race.

Fylgia—Vardögl—Ham—Hamingia—Dîs—Vætt—Draug.—The Fylgia was a tutelar angel or attendant spirit attached either to a single individual or to a whole race. To a person at the point of death the Fylgia became visible. "Thou must be a fated (moribundus) man, thou must have seen thy Fylgia," said an Icelander to one labouring under an optical delusion [1]. The Fylgia sometimes appeared to another person. Hedin, we read, returning home one Yule eve, met in the forest a Troll-wife riding on a wolf, with a rein formed of serpents, who

[1] Niál's Saga, 41.

offered to bear him company. On relating the incident to his brother Helgi, the latter foresaw his own approaching end, for he knew that it was his Fylgia that had accosted his brother, under the form of a woman on a wolf. When a person was dead or near death, his Fylgia was desirous to follow his nearest relative, or one of the family. When a person's own Fylgia appeared to him bloody, it betokened a violent death [1].

Identical apparently with the Fylgia are the HAM (HAMR, INDUVIÆ) and the HAMINGIA. In the Atlamál [2], Kostbera dreams that she saw the Ham or genius of Atli enter the house under an eagle's form, and sprinkle them all with blood. In the Vafþrudnismál and Vegtams-quiþa [3], the Hamíngior are identical with the Norns.

Connected with the foregoing is our own superstition about a child's caul. In Germany, children born with this membrane are regarded as fortunate [4], and the membrane itself is carefully preserved, or sewed in a girdle for the child to wear. Among the Icelanders this caul also bears the name of fylgia; they fancy that the guardian angel, or a part of the infant's soul dwells in it: the midwives, consequently, are careful not to injure it, but bury it under the threshold, over which the mother must walk. Whoever throws it away, or burns it, deprives the child of its guardian angel. Such a guardian is called Fylgia, because it is supposed to follow the individual; it is also called FORYNIA, from being likewise regarded as a forerunner [5].

Traditions of, and a belief in, beings, of which every person has one as an attendant, are universal over the greatest part of Norway, though the name and the idea

[1] Keyser, p, 157. [2] Str. 20. [3] Str. 48, 49; Str. 17.

[4] See the story of the Devil with the three Golden Hairs, in the Kinder und Hausmärchen, No. 29.

[5] Grimm, D. M. p. 828.

vary in different localities. In some places it is called Fölgie or Fylgia, in others Vardögl, Vardygr, Vardivil or Vardöiel, and sometimes Ham or Hau.

In some districts the Vardögl is regarded as a good spirit, that always accompanies a person, and wards off from him all dangers and mishaps; for which reason people are scrupulous about following a person out, or looking after him, or closing the door as soon as he is gone, lest they should prevent the Vardögl from following its master, who, in its absence, is exposed to mischances and temptations, and even to the risk of falling into the clutches of an evil spirit called the Thusbet, which also follows every mortal.

In other places, the Fölgie or Vardögl is looked upon rather as a warning attendant, who by knocking at the door or window, tapping on the wall, rattling the latch, etc., gives notice of the coming of an acquaintance, or that one is longing to come, or that a misfortune or a death [1] is at hand. When the Fölgie shows itself, it is generally in the form of an animal, whose qualities bear a resemblance to those of the individual. The dauntless has, therefore, for Fölgie a bold animal, as a wolf, a bear, an eagle, etc.; the crafty, a fox, or a cat; the timid, a hare, or the like. The Vardögl will sometimes appear under a human form resembling its master, but immediately vanishes; whence it is that the same person is seen at the same time in two places. One of these forms is the Fölgie, which will sometimes also appear to the individual himself, who, in that case, is said to see his own double [2]. A still more extraordinary case is that of a lad who tumbled over his own Fylgia. In Fornmanna Sögur (3. 113) we are told

[1] Hallager, Norsk Ordsamling, p. 141.

[2] The Icelander Thidrandi saw nine women clad in black, come riding from the north, and nine others, in light garments, from the south. They were the Fylgiur of his kindred.

that when Thorsten Oxefod was yet a child of seven years, he once came running into the room and fell on the floor; whereat the wise old man Geiter burst into a laugh. On the boy asking what he saw so laughable in his fall, he said, "I saw what you did not see. When you came into the room, a young white bear's cub followed you and ran before you, but on catching sight of me, he stopt, and as you came running you fell over him." This was Thorsten's own Fylgia.

If a person is desirous of knowing what animal he has for a Vardögl, he has only to wrap a knife in a napkin, with certain ceremonies, and to hold it up while he names all the animals he knows of. As soon as he has named his Fölgie, the knife will fall out of the napkin.

Our old divines assumed, in like manner, that every person has an attendant or guardian genius. In the Jernpostil (edit. 1513, p. 142) it is said: "The moment any man is born in the world, our Lord sends an angel to preserve his soul from the devil, and from all other evil;" appealing, for support of the proposition, to the testimony of St. Jerome and St. Bernard[1].

Dîs (pl. Dîsir) is a generic name for all female, mythic beings, though usually applied to a man's attendant spirit or Fölgie. Of these some are friendly, others hostile. The tutelar or friendly Dîsir are likewise called Spâdîsir, *i. e.* prophetic Dîsir: *Scotice* spae, as in spae-wife, *a prophetess, fortune-teller*. In Norway the Dîsir appear to have been held in great veneration. In the Sagas frequent mention occurs of Dîsa blot, or offerings to the Dîsir. A part of their temples was denominated the Dîsa-sal (Dîsarsalr)[2].

Vætt (Vættr, pl. Vættir) in its original signification is neither more nor less than *thing, being, wight*, though in Scandinavia (particularly Norway and Iceland) it is used

[1] Faye, p. 76 *sqq.* [2] Keyser, p. 74.

to signify a sort of female tutelary genius of a country, and then is called a LAND-VÆTT. In the Gulathing's law it is enjoined that "omni diligentia perquirant rex et episcopus ne exercecantur errores et superstitio ethnica, uti sunt incantationes et artes magicæ . . . . si in Landvættas (genios locorum) credunt quod tumulos aut cataractas inhabitent," etc.[1] The Landvætt assumes various forms. Hallager describes the Vætt as a Troll or Nisse inhabiting mounds, which for that reason are called VÆTTEHOUER. He resembles a young boy in grey clothes with a black hat[2]. The word is, nevertheless, feminine. In Ulfliot's law it was ordered that the head of every ship should be taken off before it came in sight of land, and that it should not sail near the land with gaping head and yawning beak, so as to frighten the Land-vættir[3].

DRAUG (DRAUGR), a spectre. Odin is called Drauga Drott[4] (lord of spectres) because he could raise the dead from their graves (as in the Vegtams Kviða). The apparition to a person of his Draug forebodes his death. In the Hervarar Saga[5], Draugar are spoken of as lying with the dead in their mounds. The Draug follows the person doomed whithersoever he goes, often as an insect, which in the evening sends forth a piping sound. He sometimes appears clad as a fisherman. Both the appearance of the Draug himself, as well as of his spittle (a sort of froth that is sometimes seen in boats) are omens of approaching death.

[1] Lex. Myth. p. 833.
[2] Norsk Ordsamling, p. 145.
[3] Fornmanna Sögur, p. 105.
[4] Yngl. Saga, 7.
[5] Edit. Sulm, p. 64.

SECTION II.

The foregoing comprises what is most essential of the contents of the Eddas. On turning to the later interpretations of these dark runes of the times of old, we meet with so many mutually contradicting illustrations, that it is hardly possible to extract anything like unity amid so much conflicting matter. The obscure language in which the mythology of the North is expressed, the images of which it is full, the darkness in which the first mental development of every people is shrouded, and the difficulty of rendering clear the connection between their religious ideas—all this leads every attempt at illustration sometimes in one and sometimes in another direction, each of which has, moreover, several by-ways and many wrong ones.

With regard to the importance and value of the Northern mythology, we meet with two widely different opinions. Some have considered the old Eddaic songs and traditions as mere fabrications, composed for pastime by ignorant monks in the middle age; while others have pronounced them not only ancient, but have regarded their matter as so exalted, that even ideas of Christianity are reflected in them. That Christ, for instance, is figuratively delineated in Thor, who crushes the head of the serpent; so that the Eddaic lore is an obscure sort of revelation before Revelation. The first-mentioned of these opinions, though it may have blazed up for a moment, may be now regarded as totally and for ever extinguished; for every one who reads the Eddas will at once perceive that the concord which exists between their several parts, notwithstanding that they are but fragments, the grandeur and poetic beauty, of which they in so many instances bear the impress, together with the old tongue in which the songs are

composed, could not have been produced by ignorant monks.

The second opinion can only have arisen out of a blind predilection for antiquity ; for when we abstract the religious element which is common to all religions, and the descriptions of the destruction of the world, which are spread over the whole globe, we find in the Northern mythology not one trace of that which constitutes the essential in Christianity ; and the accidental resemblance vanishes on every closer consideration. The old religion of the inhabitants of the North is in fact neither a collection of absurdities and insipid falsehoods, nor a fountain of exalted wisdom ; but is the ideas of an uncultivated people, with reference to the relation between the divine and the worldly, expressed in images intelligible to the infant understanding. The present time must not expect to find in it either a revelation of new ideas, or a guide to the way of happiness ; even the poet of the present will fail to discover in it a source of inspiration, except in so far as it may supply him with a fitting dress for his own poetic images. In fact, the Eddaic lore is important, chiefly because it sheds light on the study of antiquity, on the development of the human mind in general, and of that of our forefathers in particular.

With respect to the interpretation itself, the expounders of the Eddas are divided into two sects : one will impart to us an illustration of what the ancients themselves thought of these myths, the other will show what *may* be thought of them. The first will seize the sense of a given poem, the second will try to discover what may further be imagined from it. The latter we shall at once dismiss ; for however beautiful and elevating their interpretations may be, and however much poetic application may be made of them, they will, nevertheless, not conduct us *to*, but *from*, antiquity, while it is precisely that which we

wish, as much as possible, to become acquainted with in its whole purity. When these myths are, for example, considered not only with relation to the history of the North, but as universally historical; when we, therefore, in the Northern mythology find figurative indications of the great epochs in the history of the world; and in the several myths of nations particular manifestations of their fortunes in the course of time, it is clear that this is not truth but fiction. Though such notions of the Eddaic lore may have in themselves poetic value, though they may, in an agreeable manner, set the imagination in activity and give it a store of new images, yet will the understanding not allow itself to be set aside with impunity. If, therefore, they assume the semblance of a serious interpretation, they dissolve into airy nothingness, because they lack a firm foundation. Fiction may have its liberty, but research has its restraint.

However widely the interpreters of the Eddas differ in their opinions from each other, and however faithless they sometimes are even to themselves, their illustrations may, nevertheless, all be referred to three classes—the historic, the physical, and the ethical: to the historic method, in as far as every nation's mythology and earliest history come in contact and melt into each other at their boundaries, and transgress each other's domain; to the physical, because all mythology has nature and her manifestations for object; to the ethical, because laws for the conduct of mankind are the final intent of all religion.

The historic mode of illustration is the most circumscribed of all. As mythology embraces not only life physically and ethically considered, but also the creation and destruction of the world, the beginning and end of time, or eternity, we consequently find in it many elements that belong not to the province of history, and every attempt to bring them within its pale must naturally prove

abortive. This mode of illustration can, therefore, at best be applied only to the agency of natural beings—the gods. It is divided into two branches. It may either be assumed that real men have been regarded as gods, or that superhuman beings have been considered as persons on the earth. Of these branches the first may be subdivided: the deified beings may be regarded as impostors and deceivers, or as benefactors of mankind.

That the gods, Odin and his friends, were mere deceivers, magicians, and wizards (trollmen); that they dazzled the eyes of the people by their arts, and thereby induced them to believe whatever they deemed conducive to their worldly objects; that religion arose among the people, not as a necessity, but was a priestly imposture—such was the opinion entertained in the Christian middle age of the ancient mythology, all heathenism being considered a work of the devil, who through his ministers, the pagan priests, enlarged the realm of falsehood upon earth;—that the earliest human beings were giants of superhuman size and powers, after whom came others, less of stature, but excelling them in sagacity, who overcame them by sorcery, and gained for themselves the reputation of gods; that their successors were a mixture of both, neither so large as the giants nor so crafty as the gods, though by the infatuated people they were worshiped as gods; such was the belief in Saxo's time, who consequently sets forth the opinions just adduced, and speaks of Odin as of a being who had acquired for himself divine honours throughout Europe, and after having fixed his residence at Upsala, he and his companions were there regarded as divine beings[1]. The first class of beings was of course Ymir and his offspring, the Frost-giants; the second, Odin and his kindred; the third, the priests of the gods, who by

[1] Saxo Gram. pp. 42. *sqq.*

fraud disseminated the doctrines of their predecessors, and raised themselves to the rank of gods.

That these opinions found followers in the middle age may easily be conceived, but it may well seem extraordinary that also in modern times they have had their defenders, and that, by confounding the announcement by the priest of the pretended will of the gods with the divine beings themselves, any one could be satisfied with the persuasion, that priestly craft and deception have alone formed the entire circle of religious ideas, which are a natural necessity among every people, and one of the earliest manifestations of man's reflection on himself and on the world.

More probable is the opinion that, not deception, but real historical events have given rise to myths; that the worship of Odin and his kin and companions in the North originated in the immigration of a sacerdotal caste; that the priest's agency has, by the people themselves, been confounded with that of the god, whose minister he was; that his undertakings and exertions for the civilization of the people, the evidences of his superior penetration and higher knowledge, have, after his death, been clad in a mythic garb; and that thereby, partly through learning and partly from events, a series of myths has been framed, the elements of which now hardly admit of being separated from each other. Such was the opinion of Snorri and other ancient writers, according to whom the gods were a sacerdotal caste from Asia, even from Troy; Odin and his sons were earthly kings and priests; Odin died in Sweden, and was succeeded by Niörd; after the death of whose son, Frey, Freyia alone presided over the sacrifices, being the only one of the deities still living[1]. Such a deification of human beings is not without example in history; among the Greeks we meet with many historic

[1] Snorra-Edda, Form., Ynglingas. c. 2–13.

personages, whom admiration of their brilliant qualities, and the fictions to which they have given birth, have raised to a superhuman dignity. Connected with this opinion stands the historico-geographic mode of illustration, according to which the ideas concerning mythic beings are transferred to real actions in the North, and mythic tales of the warfare between gods and giants, and of the wandering of the gods on earth, represented as memorials of a real war between those people, and of the Æsir-religion's spread, from its chief seat in Sweden, over the neighbouring countries. This idea of the ancient doctrine having been adopted by the old writers themselves, and by so eminent an historian as Snorri, it may be regarded as the property of history. But we doubt not that the reader will have already seen, that this view is partial, that it does not exhaust the myths, but, at the utmost, embraces only a few, and even does this indirectly; for, generally speaking, it does not supply us with the original signification of the myths, but imparts only a notice of their later application. To illustrate this by an example.—The inhabitants of the North knew of a real Alfheim in Norway, and applied their ideas of the alfs, as pure and exalted beings, to the people of that district who were distinguished for a higher degree of civilization than their neighbours, but did not, on that account, renounce their belief in the alfs as superhuman beings, who they well knew stood in a superhuman relation to the rest of the creation.

All beings in the Northern mythology, says Mone, may be regarded as personified ideas, or, in other words, that mythology contains philosophic views of nature and life. So far the physical and ethical interpretations coincide as to their object; for nature and life stand in a constant relation of interchange with each other, the perception of which could not escape even the earliest observers. The physical mode of interpretation has then for object to in-

dicate those powers of nature and natural phenomena, which in the myths are represented as personal beings, and to show the accordance between the mythic representation and the agency of the natural powers. This mode of illustration has been followed and developed by the greater number of interpreters, and, on the whole, none of the proposed systems has in its several parts been so borne out as this. To the Northern mythology it, moreover, presents itself so naturally, that its application is almost unavoidable; for not only have the ancient writers themselves sometimes expressly declared the natural phenomenon intended by this or that myth, as the rainbow, an earthquake, etc., but some myths, as that of the wolf Fenrir, the Midgard's serpent and others, contain so evident a representation of a natural agency, that it is hardly possible to err as to their signification. In the case, therefore, of every obscure myth, it is advisable first to ascertain whether it is or is not a natural myth, before making any attempt to explain it in some other way. But because this mode of explanation is the simplest, most natural, and most accordant with the notions of antiquity, it does not follow that it can be applied in all cases, or that it is always applied rightly. An explanation may be right in its idea, without necessarily being so in its several parts. The idea may be seized, but the application missed. But the idea itself may also be a misconception, when no real agreement is found between the myth and the natural object to which it is applied; when the resemblance is, as it were, put into it, but does not of itself spring from it. An example or two may serve to explain this, to which the reader may easily add others. An interpretation fails, when it is made up of that which is only the poetic garb of the thought. The Valkyriur are, for instance, sent forth by Odin, to choose the heroes that are to fall in a battle: they hover over the conflicting bands,

they mingle in the hostile ranks, they take the fallen in their embrace, and ride with them on their heavenly horses to Valhall. Here is only a beautiful poetic expression of the thought, that Valfather Odin decides the result of the battle, that his will decrees who shall fall, and that this kind of death is a blessing, through which the hero is taken into his abode: while by explaining the Valkyriur as bright aërial meteors, balls of fire, and the like, which, by the way, could not make their appearance on every battle-field, we impair all the poetic beauty, by conceiving to be physical that which is purely imaginary. When the signification of Skirnir's journey[1] is thus explained: that Frey is the sun, Gerd the northern light, her father, Gymir, the frozen ocean, and that Frey and Gerd's love produce spring or summer, we find in this explanation many and striking resemblances with the several contents of the poem; though these appear to be purely accidental, because a principal resemblance is wanting, because for Gerd, as the northern light, it can be no very formidable threat, that she shall always continue barren, and live united with a Frost-giant, which is, in fact, her constant lot; and Frey's fructifying embrace—for without fruit it cannot be, whatever we may take Frey to be, since it takes place in the wood of buds—has on a being like the northern light no effect, which is, and continues to be, unfruitful. The explanation must, therefore, of itself pass over to the fruitfulness of the earth, effected by the summer sun, but thereby, at the same time, abandons its first direction. Here the idea, which really forms the ground-work of the poem, is in fact comprehended, viz. the earth rendered fertile by Frey; but when put aside by other similitudes, it is almost lost in another idea—the beauty of the northern light.

If, with some commentators, we take the god Vidar for

[1] See p. 46.

the silent departure of the year, and, consequently, of the winter also; the time when Thor wanders to Geirröd [1], for the autumn or beginning of winter; and Grid, the mother of Vidar, who dwells on the way to Geirröd, for the autumn or end of summer, in opposition to her son; and when we find that she must be a giantess, seeing that her son closes the winter; if we assume all this, a series of ideas is set up which have no natural connection with the myths. Vidar, it is true, is silent, but what is the silent departure of the year? In the North it is wont to be noisy enough. And how can the silent departure of the year be said to destroy Fenrir, and to survive the gods, as it is said of Vidar [2]? How can the mother be in opposition to the son? and how can her nature be determined by the son's? If Grid is the end of summer, she might, perhaps, be said to bring forth winter, but not the close of winter; nor, because Vidar closes the winter, must his mother be a giantess, but rather the converse; if his mother is a giantess, he might be winter, and a giant himself. By this interpretation, contradiction seems heaped on contradiction.

Among the extraordinary directions which the physical mode of interpretation has taken, must be noticed that which may be called the chymical. It consists in showing the accordance between the myths and the later systems of chymistry. It explains, for instance, the three equal divinities by the three natural substances, sulphur, quicksilver, and salt; Odin, Vili, and Ve [3], as the three laws of nature, gravity, motion, and affinity. It takes the rivers that flow from Hvergelmir [4] to denote destructive kinds of gas in the bowels of the earth; the horses of the gods, on which they ride over Bifröst, for vibrations in the air; Sleipnir among others for the vibrations of light: Valfather

[1] Page 52. [2] Pages 82, 84. [3] Page 4. [4] Pages 3, 21.

Odin for elective affinity, in the chymical acceptation. According to this system, Thor is not the thunder-storm, but its profounder cause, electricity. By his name of Auku-Thor (derived from auka, *to eke, augment*) is signified an accumulation of electricity; his belt must then bear allusion to the electric condenser; his iron gloves are conductors. The myth of Thor's journey to Griotunagard [1] bears allusion to the diffusion of terrestrial magnetism in the vegetable kingdom, while Hrungnir is petrifaction, Freyia and Sif are carbon and oxygen, Thor's son, Magni, is the magnet, and Möckurkalfi the magnetic needle. In the story of the Origin of Poetry [2], Kvasir is saccharine matter, Fialar and Galar, who slay him, putrefaction and fermentation, by which saccharine matter is decomposed; Odhrærir is tension, Sôn vibration, Bodn echo, Gilling dregs that are precipitated; his wife, who is crushed by a millstone, tartar, Suttung spirituous drink, and Gunnlöd carbonic acid. Many of the illustrations according to this system might be adduced as examples that the idea is there, but that the application has failed, and no wonder, as it gives credit to antiquity for a knowledge of nature, which it neither had nor could have.

In this mode of explanation is comprised that which may be termed the astronomical, as far as its object is to show that the knowledge the ancients had of the sun, the stars, and the division of the year, was applied mythically, and constituted a part of the learning of their priests. Traces of this mode are to be found in almost all mythologies, as the contemplation of the heavenly bodies must find its application in life, in determining the courses of the year, in distinguishing particular days, and, by certain significant signs, in fixing the fugacious with time in the memory. Herewith may the arithmetic of the ancients be

[1] Page 69. [2] Page 40.

brought in connection, and the explanation will then, at the same time, be mathematical. Both these methods of illustration are, however, in the Northern mythology of but limited application, and entirely fail in the case of myths that have another origin and object. It has already been remarked by others, that among our forefathers we find very little, next, indeed, to nothing, about the sun, moon, and stars. Sôl [1], that is the damsel who drives the horses of the sun, is, it is true, named as a goddess, but only incidentally, and without mythic action. The sun itself was no god, but only a disk of fire issuing from Muspellheim, the region of eternal light, drawn by two horses and guided by the damsel Sôl; in its most exalted character appearing only as Odin's eye; but of any adoration paid to it, not a trace appears in the whole mythology. Bil [1] is also mentioned as a goddess, but she is one of the moon's spots, not the moon itself: of her worship not a trace is to be found. The stars came forth as sparks from Muspellheim [2], and were fixed on and under heaven; an idea so childish, that it could not possibly have occurred to any one who thought of worshiping such spangles as gods. Two are mentioned as formed of earthly matter, viz. Thiassi's eyes [3], and Örvandil's toe [4] (probably the two principal stars in the head of the bull, and the polar star, or one of the stars in the great bear); but their origin from giants must at once have prevented all adoration of them. With these exceptions, stars are neither spoken of nor even named in any myth. Where so little attention was paid to the heavenly bodies and their motions, it cannot be supposed that any idea existed of a complete solar year with its twelve months; nor do the two passages in the Eddas, where mention clearly occurs of the division of time [5], give any cause for supposing it, as they name only

[1] Page 6. [2] Page 5. [3] Page 45. [4] Page 71.
[5] Gylf. 8. Voluspá, Str. 6.

the parts of the day and night, according to which the year may be calculated, without, by any more precise data, bringing it in connection with the sun and moon. Of the moon they observed two principal changes, Nyi and Nithi, which implies an observation of its course. Of the sun, on the contrary, we find nothing, except in connection with the day. This leads to the supposition, that the oldest year among the inhabitants of the North, as among other nations, was a lunar year, which is corroborated by the Vafthrudnismal [1], where, after having made mention of day and night, in the same strophe it adds, that the gods created Nyi and Nithi for the calculation of the year: nor is there any historic information to the contrary. On the other hand, the earliest mention of a regular computation by the solar year of 364 days, or 12 months, is from the years 950 to 970, that is, at the utmost, only fifty years older than the introduction of Christianity. The Icelanders, therefore, who at that time adopted a similar computation, cannot have brought such accurate knowledge with them when they emigrated from Norway, where, it can hardly be assumed such a calculation was in use at the time of Harald Hárfagr [2], much less before his time. Hence some doubt may be entertained whether the twelve mansions of the Æsir [3] have reference to the year determined by the course of the sun. As, however, some distinguished commentators have adopted this view, a short sketch of the system adopted by the late Professor Finn Magnusen [4] is here given, as most in accordance with the Grimnismal.

[1] Str. 25.

[2] In whose reign the colonization of Iceland commenced, an. 874.

[3] Grimnismál, Str. 4–17.

[4] See commentary in 'Den Ældre Edda,' i. pp. 148, *seq.*

Mansion.	Divinity.	Month.
I. Ydal.	Ull.	November.
II. Alfheim.	Frey.	December.
III. Valaskialf.	Vali.	January.
IV. Söckquabeck.	Saga.	February.
V. Gladsheim.	Hropt.	March.
VI. Thrymheim.	Skadi.	April.
VII. Breidablik.	Baldur.	May.
VIII. Himinbiörg.	Heimdall.	June.
IX. Folkvang.	Freyia.	July.
X. Glitnir.	Forseti.	August.
XI. Noatûn.	Niörd.	September.
XII. Landvidi.	Vidar.	October.

Here congruity certainly prevails in many parts: winter precedes summer, and begins with Ull just at the time when the ancients began to reckon their winter; Ull can very well inhabit the humid dales (Ydalir[1]) in November: Frey, in December, may have got Alfheim for a tooth-gift[2]; Vali, who renews the year[3], presides in January; Odin with Saga may here in February repeat the records of warlike feats performed, and the like[4]. Notwithstanding all which, it appears to me, that to these systems it may be objected, that there is no other ground for assuming that the mansions of the gods stand in any fixed order with respect to each other, than because they are so enumerated in the Grimnismal; for the same poem enumerates also the horses of the Æsir, the several names of Odin, etc., etc., and may, therefore, be considered a sort of catalogue or nomenclature of mythic objects. Nor is there any more reason for excluding Thor than for excluding Heimdall, the god of the rainbow, both being connected with the aërial phenomena, and have no reference to the annual course of the sun; and, in general, it is clear, as far as I can perceive, that neither Vidar, nor Niörd, the god of the wind and ocean, nor Frey and Freyia, the divinities of

[1] Page 30. [2] Page 25. [3] Pages 30, 84. [4] Page 34.

earth's fertility, nor Saga, the muse of history, as these beings are represented in the Eddas, either have reference to, or stand in connection with the course of the sun, or with the division of the year.

With respect to the arithmetic of the Scandinavians, we find here, as among all ancient people, a frequent recurrence of certain sacred numbers, as 3, 7, 9, 4, 8[1]; but to this their whole arithmetic seems limited; and if a solitary instance occurs of something that may have a more recondite allusion, as, for instance, the 540 gates of Valhall[2], from each of which 800 Einheriar could ride abreast, such matter can, at the utmost, only be regarded as remnants of older traditions, whose original connection is lost. By multiplying 540 by 800, we get a number identical with an Indian period; but is not this identity purely accidental? It is impossible to conceive what connection can subsist between an Indian period of time and the doors of Valhall and the number of Einheriar.

Every religion of Antiquity embraces not only the strictly religious elements, such as belief in the supernatural, and the influence of this belief on the actions of men, but, in general, all that knowledge which is now called science. The priests engrossed all the learning. Knowledge of nature, of language, of man's whole intellectual being and culture, of the historic origin of the state, and of the chief races, was clad in a poetic, often a mythic, garb, propagated by song and oral tradition, and, at a later period, among the most cultivated of the people, particularly certain families, by writing. These disseminated, among the great mass of the community, whatever seemed to them most appropriate to the time and place. Such is

[1] For the predilection entertained by the Saxons for the number 8, see Lappenberg's 'England under the Anglo-Saxon Kings,' i. 77.

[2] Page 19.

the matter still extant in the Eddas, even as they now lie before us, after having past through the middle age. The later interpreters are, therefore, unquestionably right in seeking in these remains not only traditions of the origin and destruction of the world, of the relation of man to the Divinity, but also the outlines of the natural and historic knowledge possessed by Antiquity. We have of course, in the foregoing sketch, omitted all that might seem to have an historic signification, and communicated that alone which may be regarded as purely mythic.

This mythic matter is comprised in two ancient monuments, the Elder and the Younger Edda, called usually, after their supposed compilers, Sæmund's Edda, and Snorri's Edda. The first-mentioned contains songs that are older than Christianity in the North, and have been orally transmitted and finally committed to writing in the middle age. They have, for the most part, reached us as fragments only, and several chasms have, at a later period, with greater or less felicity, been filled up by prosaic introductions or insertions. The other Edda consists of tales founded on, and often filled up with, verses from the Elder, but which have been written down after the time of paganism, preserved, as memorials of the past, by individual scholars of the time, and to which, here and there, are added illustrations of some part of the subject[1]. To all

[1] The following is the introduction to the matter contained in the portion of the Prose, or Snorri's, Edda, which is entitled 'Gylfaginning,' or *Delusion of Gylfi*:—

"King Gylfi (see p. 34, *note* [6]) was a wise man and of great knowledge. He wondered much that the Æsir folk were so wise that everything went as they willed. He considered whether it might proceed from their nature, or be caused by the divine powers whom they worshiped. He undertook a journey to Asgard, and travelled in disguise, having assumed the likeness of an aged man; and was thus concealed. But the Æsir were too wise in possessing fore-knowledge, and knew of his journey ere he came, and received him with illusions. So when he came into the city he per-

this are appended fragments of divers sorts of mythic learning, intended for the use of later skalds, as an illustration of, and guide to, the use of poetic expressions. Hence it will be manifest that the older of these collections is the most important, though to the understanding, arranging and completing of it, considerable help is found in the younger, and the interpretation of the one is not practicable without constantly comparing it with the other. Where the myths in the Elder Edda are at all detailed and complete, they are full of poetry and spirit, but they

ceived a hall so lofty that he could hardly see over it. Its roof was covered with gilded shields, like a shingle roof.

"Gylfi saw a man at the hall gates playing with small swords, of which he had seven at a time in the air. This man inquired his name. His name, he said, was Gangleri, that he had come a tedious way, and requested a night's lodging. He then asked to whom the hall belonged. The man answered that it was their king's: 'but I will attend you to see him, you can then yourself ask him his name.' Thereupon the man turned into the hall followed by Gangleri, and instantly the gate was closed at their heels. He there saw many apartments and many people; some at games, some drinking, some fighting with weapons. He then looked about, and saw many things that seemed to him incredible: whereupon he said to himself,—

Every gate,
ere thou goest forward,
shalt thou inspect;
for 'tis hard to know
where foes sit
in the dwelling.
(Hávamál, Str. 1.)

"Here he saw three thrones, one above another, and a man sitting on each. He then asked what the name of each chieftain might be. His conductor answered, that he who sat on the lowest throne was a king and named Hár (High); that the next was named Jafnhár (Equally high); and that the highest of all was called Thridi (Third). Hár then asked the comer what further business he had; adding, that he was entitled to meat and drink, like all in Hava-hall. He answered, that he would first inquire whether any sagacious man were there? Hár told him that he would not come off whole, unless he proved himself the wiser:

but stand forth
while thou mak'st inquiry:
'tis for him to sit who answers.

Gangleri then began his speech." The questions and answers that follow constitute what is called Snorri's, or the Prose, or the Younger Edda.

often consist in dark allusions only, a defect which the Younger cannot supply, for here we too often meet with trivial and almost puerile matter, such as we may imagine the old religious lore to have become, when moulded into the later popular belief. It follows, therefore, that several myths now appear as poor, insipid fictions, which, in their original state, were probably beautiful both in form and substance. In both Eddas, the language is often obscure, and the conception deficient in clearness; it appears, moreover, that several myths are lost[1], so that a complete exposition of the Northern Mythology is no longer to be obtained.

All illustration of Northern mythology must proceed from the Eddas, and the most faithful is, without doubt, that which illustrates them from each other. It may in the meanwhile be asked, whether their matter has its original home in the North, or is of foreign growth? For myths may either have originated among the Northern people themselves, and gradually in course of time have developed themselves among their descendants as a production of the intellectual and political life of the people; or they may have found entrance from without, have been forced on the people of the North at the conquest of their countries, and with the suppression of their own ideas; or, lastly, they may consist of a compound of native and foreign matter. This question has been the subject of strict and comprehensive investigation. To the faith of the ancient Finnish race is with great probability referred

[1] Instances of lost myths are, "How Idun embraced her brother's murderer," Loka-glepsa, Str. 17; "Odin's sojourn in Samsö," *ib.* Str. 24; "How Loki begat a son with Týr's wife," *ib.* Str. 40; Myths concerning Heimdall's head, and his contest with Loki for the Brisinga-men, Skaldskap. 8 (see p. 29); a myth concerning the giant Vagnhöfdi, Saxo, edit. Stephanii, p. 9; edit. Müller, pp. 34, 36, 45; and of Jötnaheiti, in Snorra-Edda, p. 211; of the giant Thrivaldi slain by Thor, and other of his feats. Skaldskap. 4, and Harbarðslj. Str. 29, 35, 37, etc.

the myth of Forniot's three sons, Hler (sea), Logi (fire), Kari (wind)[1]; also that of Thor, as the god of thunder, and a comparison with the belief still prevalent among the Lapps will tend to confirm this opinion. This, however, constitutes a very inconsiderable part of the Æsir-mythology, and cannot have contributed much to its development. On the other hand, everything shows that it had its original home in the South and the East; thither point tradition, resemblance to the mythology of the Germanic and even more southern nations, and language. An inquiry into this opinion of its origin, which traces it to the banks of the Ganges, may be instituted in two ways: either by tracing a similitude between its several myths and those of other nations, or by considering as a whole the spirit of the one mythology compared with that of the other. A comparison of the several myths, which has with great learning been made by Finn Magnusen, leads to the result, that between the Northern on the one side, and the Indian, Persian and other kindred mythologies on the other, are found many striking resemblances, particularly with reference to the creation of the world, the transmigration of souls, regeneration, etc.; while, on the contrary, they rather diverge from each other, on a comparison together of their respective spirits. The Oriental is contemplative, the Northern is one of pure action; according to the first, the gods are to be reconciled by works of atonement, according to the second, by battle. The one was a natural consequence of the warmth of the East, the other of the Northern cold. It seems, therefore, probable, that the earliest elements of the Northern mythology were brought from Asia through divers other nations to the North, where they became developed and formed after a peculiar fashion. The rugged, wild, grand nature of the country supplied those great and lofty images, drawn from

[1] Page 27.

ice-bergs and rocks; and the ever active course of life, in which men were there engaged, transformed the sluggish, half-slumbering gods of the East, absorbed in contemplation, into beings that rode on the wings of the storm, and, in the raging battle, gathered men to them, to reward them in another world with combats and death, from which they rose again to life, and with the aliments known to the natives of the North as the most nutritive, and by which they were strengthened to begin the combat anew[1]. Every closer consideration of Northern life, of the people's constant warfare with nature and with foes, renders it easily conceivable, that Odin, however Buddhistic he may originally have been, must under a Northern sky be transformed into a Valfather[2]; that the Northern man, to whom death was an every-day matter, must have a Valhall, and that the idea of a state of happiness without battle, of quiet without disquiet, must be for ever excluded. After all, in explaining the Eddas, it does not seem necessary to resort to other mythologies, though a comparison with them is always valuable, and highly interesting, when it shows an analogy between them and the myths of the North.

To arrive at a satisfactory explanation of the Northern myths, it is necessary to commence with the signification of the mythic names. Verbal illustration must precede every other; when that fails, the rest is almost always defective. The names of the gods are, as Grimm observes, in themselves significant, bearing an allusion to their nature[3]. But in this investigation, difficulties sometimes arise, as it is generally the oldest words of a language, that form the ground-work, and all etymology is, moreover, exposed to much caprice. The illustration of myths will also be greatly prejudiced, if we yield to a blind guess

[1] Page 19. [2] Page 15.

[3] Deutsche Mythologie, p. 201, 1st edit.

among forms of like sound. Every verbal illustration must, therefore, be conformable to the laws of transition between the Northern and its kindred tongues; a rule, by the way, easier to give than to follow.

To explain a myth is to show what can have given occasion to the image on which it hinges, and to express, in unemblematic language, the thought which serves as a basis for the image. Here explanation may usually stop; for to follow the figurative picture through all its parts is not necessary, that being a process which will naturally be undertaken by every poetic mind, and the object of explanation is not to excite the fancy, but to lead it to the point whence it may begin its flight. In the myth of Frey and Gerd's love, for instance, the thought forms the basis, that the god of fecundity longs to spread his blessing over the barren earth, and to wake in the seed its slumbering efficacy. To show this is to explain the myth. But this thought is expressed by a picture of all the desires and sufferings of love, of the blessing of fruitfulness, as the effect of love in the youthful heart; whereby the myth becomes a beautiful poem. To develop this poetic beauty is not the object of illustration; it can escape no one who has a feeling for poetry. And to follow all the possible resemblances between the effect of fruitfulness in the earth, and the effect of love in the heart, would be as uninteresting as tasteless.

SECTION III.

Every illustration of the Eddas has something individual; it depends on the idea we have formed to ourselves of Antiquity. That which I shall here attempt has not for object either to disparage any foregoing one, or to render it superfluous. Availing myself of the labours of my predecessors, I shall endeavour to represent the principal Northern myths in their most natural connection, and thereby furnish my readers with a view of Northern mythology, by which the mental culture and life of the people may the more easily be conceived.

Creation.—Before heaven and earth, gods and men existed, there were cold and heat, mist and flame, which are represented as two worlds, Niflheim and Muspellheim[1]. Over the hovering mist and the world of fire no rulers are named, Surt being only the guardian of the latter. Between both worlds there was nothing except Ginnungagap[1], a boundless abyss, empty space; but by the contact of ice and heat, there was formed, through the power of the Almighty, the first, unorganic foundation of heaven and earth—matter. This was called Ymir[2], and is represented under the form of a huge giant. Offspring came forth from under his arm, and his feet procreated with each other; for the unorganized mass was increased by life not inward but from without. He was nourished by the dripping rime from the constant melting of the ice, represented under the figure of a cow[3], the symbol of nourishment and preservation; or, in other words, matter constantly added to itself, and spread itself into a monstrous unorganic race, the Frost-giants, or the vast groups of snow-mountains and ice-bergs.

Illustration.—Before the world itself, in the begin-

[1] Page 3. [2] Page 3. [3] Page 4.

ning, its foundation existed: a creation from nothing was incomprehensible. The existing things were cold and heat, ice and light. Towards the north lay Niflheim[1], towards the south Muspellheim. Niflheim (from nifl, Ger. nebel, Lat. nebula, Gr. *νεφέλη*) signifies *the home*, or *world of mist*. Here was Hvergelmir[2] (from hver, *a large kettle, spring*, and gelmir, from gialla, *stridere*, comp. Ohg. galm, *stridor, sonitus*[3]), *the bubbling, roaring kettle*, or *spring*, whence the ice-streams flow forth. They are called Elivâgar[4] (from el, *storm, rain, sleet*, and vagr (vogr), *wave, stream*). The word eitr, which is applied to these and similar icy streams, signifies poison, but originally the most intense cold. The Swedes still say 'etter-kallt,' equivalent to our *piercing cold*. The first twelve rivers which run from Hvergelmir, some of which occur also as rivers proceeding from Eikthyrnir's horn in Vaihall[5], signify the misty exhalations, before the creation of the world, like the clouds afterwards. Muspellheim, it may be supposed, betokened (in contradistinction to Niflheim) *the world of light, warmth, fire*; but the origin of the word is unknown[6]. Over this world Surt (the *swart*, connected with svart, *niger*[7]) ruled, a god who reveals himself in the burning fire, and whose sword is flames. In its signification of *swart, browned by fire*, the name resembles Kris'na (*the black, violet*), one of the names of the Indian deity Vishnu. Surt is not an evil being; he comes forth, it is true, at the end of the world, which he burns, but it is the corrupt, fallen world, after which a state of bliss will begin. Nor is he black of hue: on the contrary, he and his followers, Muspell's sons, form a bright, shining band[8]. Surt, in my opinion, is not the same as he whose power sends forth the heat, for then Surt's name, not this periphrasis,

[1] Page 3. Hrafnag. Oþins, 25, 26.
[2] Pages 3, 12.
[3] Grimm, D. M. p. 530.
[4] Page 3.
[5] Page 20.
[6] Page 3, *note* [2].
[7] Grimm, p. 769.
[8] Gylf. p. 72.

would have been used[1]. It is not he who causes the hot and cold worlds to come in contact and operate on each other, whereby the world's foundation came into being: it is a higher being, the Ineffable, the Almighty, without whose will the worlds of mist and of light would have remained for ever, each within its bounds. But He willed, His power manifested itself, and creation began. Between both worlds was Ginnunga-gap (the abyss of abysses), from ginn, denoting something great, widely extended, whence is formed ginnúngr, *a wide expanse*, here used in the genitive plural. This appellation, as well as Elivâgar, was by the geographers applied to the Frozen ocean, one of the many proofs that mythic names have obtained an historic application.

Ymir (from ómr, ymr, at ymja) signifies *the noisy, whistling, blustering*; it is the primeval chaos. In Aurgelmir (Örgelmir), his other name[2], aur signifies *matter, the oldest material substance*, also *mud, clay*. This grew and became consistent, strong, firm; in other words, he brought forth Thrudgelmir, who increased in size till he became a perfect mountain, Bergelmir[3]. Auþhumla[2] (derived from auðr, *desert*, Ger. öde, and hum, *darkness, dusk*, with the derivative termination la) shows that the matter increased by the streams that ran through the desert darkness. The cow is found in almost all cosmogonies. Hrîmþurs[2] (from hrím, *rime, rime frost*, and þurs, þuss, *giant*) signifies plainly enough the ice-bergs, and their senseless being.

The Universal Father (Alföðr) was among the Frost-giants[4]. That is, the creative power began to operate in the unorganic, elementary mass. The cow, or nourishing power, licked the salt stones, and thereby produced an internal motion, so that life sprang up. It began with

[1] See p. 3; also the passage in Gylf. p. 6, where Surt is already mentioned by name.

[2] Page 3.

[3] It should therefore be written Berggelmir.

[4] Page 4.

the hair, the first growing plant; then the head, the abode, of thought, came forth; and lastly, the entire human creature. Vegetable, intellectual, and animal life came into activity, the strictly so-called creation began, the first intelligent being existed. It had power through its internal virtue, it increased itself of itself: Buri, *the bringer forth*, produced Bör, *the brought forth*. Bör married Bestla, or Belsta[1], a daughter of the giant Bölthorn; the higher mental power began to operate in the better part of the miserable material, which was thereby ennobled, and the creative powers, the Æsir, came forth: they were good gods, opposed to monsters, to the wicked giants. The Æsir are represented as three brothers, that is, three directions of the same agency, Odin, Vili, and Ve, or Mind, Will, and Holiness. These sons of Bör slew Ymir or Chaos, and formed of him heaven and earth[1]. But a part of the material escaped from their quickening power, the highest mountain peaks remained untouched by the inundation produced; the sea gradually subsided, and around the inhabited earth high ice-bergs were formed, the family of Bergelmir. From the world of light came the bright heavenly bodies, but they wandered about without object or aim. The gods placed them in order and fixed their course: night and day, winter and summer, took each its turn; days and years might be reckoned. The most central part of the earth, or Midgard, was appointed for the future human race; the Æsir fixed their abode in Asgard, the highest part of the world. This was the first period of creation: they rested.

Illustration.—The word *salt*, Lat. sal, salum, Gr. σάλος, ἅλς, is referred to the Sanskrit zal, *to put oneself in motion* (Lat. salire). It is the expression for the moving, animating, recreative power. Buri denotes *the forth-bringing, origin, source*: it is referred to the Sansk. b'ú, *to be*,

[1] Page 4.

also *to consider, think*, with many derivatives. Börr, Burr, or Bors, is *the brought forth, born*, Sansk. b'áras, Goth. baurs, Lat. por, puer. It also forms an adjective bor-inn, *born*, from bera, *to bear, bring forth*, from the past tense of which, bar, is derived barn, *a* child, A. S. bearn, Scot. bairn: burr also (A. S. byre) is used by the skalds for *son*. By Bölthorn (from *trouble, evil, bale*, and þorn, *thorn*) is expressed the bad quality of matter, as opposed to the gods. Of Bestla, or Belsta, the etymon is uncertain, as is also the signification of the myth. The names Odin, Vili, and Ve will be noticed hereafter. The general denomination of these gods is As, pl. Æsir; Goth. ans, A. S. ós, pl. és (analogously with Ger. Gans, A. S. gós, gés, *goose, geese*). Jornandes calls them Anses. The root is the Sansk. as, *to be, exist*, and is the same as the Latin termination ens[1]. The boat in which Bergelmir escaped is called lúðr, signifying *a lute, drum*, also a sort of sack or case used in the ancient mills; its meaning here cannot, however, be doubtful, as it evidently corresponds to Noah's ark: its radical signification may lie in its hollowed-out form.

With the creation of the gods this world begins. There was a state before it, and a state will follow it. In the state before it the raw elements existed, but it was a rough, unformed life: mind was yet lacking in the giant's body. With Odin and the Æsir the intellectual life began to operate on the raw masses, and the world in its present state came into existence.

Day and night were opposed to each other; light came

[1] The Æsir are the creators, sustainers and regulators of the world, the spirits of thought and life that pervade and animate all dead nature, and seek to subject it to the spiritual will. They assemble daily to hold council on the world's destinies. The human form and manner of being are ascribed to them, but in a higher and nobler manner; they hear and see more acutely, they go from place to place with inconceivable speed. Petersen, Nor. Myth. p. 116.

from above, darkness from beneath. Night was before day, winter before summer. Light existed before the sun. The moon preceded, the sun followed.

Illustration.—Here are several denominations, the significations of which are of little importance, and also very doubtful. The three husbands of Night, it is supposed, bear allusion to the three divisions of the night (eyktir). The similarity of the name of her first husband, Naglfari, to Naglfar, that of the ship formed of the nails of the dead, that is to appear at Ragnaröck[1], is remarkable, though probably purely accidental. Aud, the name of their son, denotes *void, desert*. Annar, her second husband's name, signifies merely *second, other*. Onar, as he is also called, has been compared with the Gr. *ὄναρ, a dream*. Delling (Dögling), her third husband's name, may be a diminutive of dagr, *day*, and signify *dawn*[2].

Hrîmfaxi, the name of the horse of night, signifies *rime-* or *frosty-mane*. His other appellation, Fiörsvartnir, may be rendered *life-obscurer*. Skinfaxi, the name of the horse of day, denotes *shining-mane*; his other name, Glad, *brightness*. Mundilföri has been derived from O. Nor. möndull, *an axis*; a derivation, if to be relied on, which seems to indicate a knowledge of the motion of the heavens round the earth. The spots in the moon, which are here alluded to, require but little illustration[3]. Here they are children carrying water in a bucket, a superstition still preserved in the popular belief of the Swedes[4]. Other nations see in it a man with a dog, some a man with a bundle of brushwood, for having stolen which on a Sunday he was condemned to figure in the moon[5], etc.

[1] Page 80. [2] Page 5. [3] Page 6.

[4] Ling's Eddornas Sinnebildslära, i. 78.

[5] Lady Cynthia is thus described by Chaucer (*Testam. of Cresseide*, 260–263):—

> Her gite was gray and ful of spottis blake,
> And on her brest a chorle paintid ful even,

Glen, the husband of the sun, is the Kymric word for *sun*. Her horses are Arvakr, *the vigilant*, and Alsvith, *the all-burning, all-rapid*. The sun is feminine and the moon masculine, because day is mild and friendly, night raw and stern; while in the south, day is burning and night the most pleasant. The father of Winter, Vindsval, denotes *windy, cold*. The father of Summer is Svasud, or *mild, soft*. Hræsvelg, the name of the north wind, represented as an eagle, signifies *corpse-devourer*[1].

Dwarfs and Men.—The gods assembled on Ida's plain[2], etc. The maidens from Jötunheim, were, without doubt, the maidens of fate or destiny, who craved the creation of the beings that should be subjected to them. Now, therefore, follows the creation of dwarfs and men. The subordinate powers of nature were generated in the earth; men were created from trees. This is the gradual development of organic life. The nature of the three gods who were active in the creation of man is particularly marked by their respective donations to the trees, that is, to organic nature in its first development, whereby man is distinguished from the vegetable[3].

Bering a bushe of thornis on his bake,
Whiche for his theft might clime no ner the heven.

In Ritson's Ancient Songs (ed. 1790, p. 35) there is one on the 'Mon in the Mone.'

Shakspeare also mentions him and his bush:

Steph. I was the man in the moon, when time was.
Cal. I have seen thee in her, and I do adore thee;
My mistress showed me thee, and thy dog and thy bush.

Again: *Tempest*, ii. 2.

Quince. ..... One must come in with a bush of thorns and a lantern, and say, he comes to disfigure, or to present, the person of moonshine.
Mids. Night's Dream, i. 3.

For Oriental and other traditions connected with the man in the moon, see Grimm, D. M. p. 679.

[1] Grimm calls attention to the apparent connection between the Lat. *aquilo* and *aquila*, the Gr. ἄνεμος and ἀετὸς, from the root ἄω, ἄημι, etc.

[2] Pages 9, 10.

[3] Page 10.

Illustration.—Iðavöllr, or Ida's plain (whether derived from ið, *action*, or from the dwarf's name, Iði, *gold*, and signifying either *the plain of action*, or *of gold*) denotes a heavenly, bright abode. The occupations of the Æsir are an imitation of those of men. To forge metals was one of the most honourable employments of a freeman; equally so was the game of tables. To play at tables signifies simply to lead a life of enjoyment and happiness. Hence, on the other hand, the son says to his mother, Groa, "Thou didst set an odious play-board before me, thou who didst embrace my father;" that is, "thou didst prepare for me an unhappy life[1]." With respect to the three maidens from Jötunheim, opinions have been much divided. The most natural interpretation seems to me, that they were the three Norns, the goddesses of fate. When these came, the attention of the gods became directed to that which should yet come to pass, and their hitherto useless energies acquired a definite object. The Norns, who had been reared among the giants, must also come before the beings were created who, during the whole course of their existence, were to be subjected to them. It is, moreover, said that mankind lay like senseless trees, without fate and destiny (örlögslausir), but that they now got fate (örlög). Askr is the ash tree; what tree is meant by embla is doubtful.

The Northern Mythology, like almost every other, presents us with three equally powerful gods. In the Gylfaginning they are called Hâr, the *High*; Jafnhâr, the *Equally High*; and Þriði, the *Third*. The first and last of these are also surnames of Odin; it might otherwise seem probable, that here, where they are opposed to King Gylfi, and the scene lies in Sweden, the three chief gods worshiped at Upsala, Odin, Thor, and Frey, were intended. At the creation of the world, the three active

[1] Gróu-galdr, Str. 3.

deities are Odin, Vili, and Ve, who are brothers; at the creation of mankind, they are Odin, Hœnir, and Lodur, who are not brothers. These beings, therefore, denote several kinds of the divine agency, but are not the same. Odin's name shall be further considered hereafter; here we will merely observe that it bears allusion to mind or thought, and breathing; it is the quickening, creating power. Vili, or Vilir[1], is the Old Norsk expression for *will*, which, if referred to the Sansk. vél, or véll, Gr. εἰλέω, Lat. volo, velle (volvo), would denote the power that sets matter in motion. Among the dwarfs also the name of Vili occurs. Ve signifies in the O. Nor. tongue, *a place of assembly*, with the idea of holiness and peace, and is the root of at vígja, *to consecrate* (Goth. veihs, Ohg. wîh, *sacred*; Goth. vaihts, *a thing, the created, consecrated*; O. Nor. vættr, *thing*, opp. to óvættr, *a monster*). It expresses therefore *consecration*, that is, *separation from the evil, hurtful or disturbing*. Hence, at the creation of the world, Ve operates so far as the divine power obstructs the opposing evil matter, that would not yield to Thought and Will. Thus explained, Odin, Vili and Ve accurately correspond to the Indian trinity, Trimurti, and the three chief Indian gods, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, the creating, preserving, and judging powers, or omnipotence, goodness, and justice. As Frigg is said to be married to Odin, Vili, and Ve[2], so is the primeval mother of the Indians, Parasakti, represented as the wife of the three first-created gods. According to Finn Magnusen, Vili is *light*, and Ve *fire*, whereby it is, at the same time, assumed that Vili is the same with Hœnir, and Ve with Lodur. At the creation of man, Odin gave önd, Hœnir óð, Lodur lá and litu goðu. Önd signifies *spirit* or *breath*, the intellectual or physical life; óðr signifies *sense, mind*; önd and óðr are to each other as *anima* and *mens* (óðr from vaða, *vadere*;

[1] Ynglingas. cc. 3, 5. [2] Page 32, and *note*.

mens from meare); óðr is then the outward and inward sense, or *perception*. Lá is *water, fluid*; litr, *colour*, whereby allusion is made to the circulation of the blood and the vital warmth thereby produced. Here then are expressed the three actions of animal life: *to breathe, to perceive, to move from within*. The derivation of Hœnir is unknown. He is called Odin's friend, and associate, and fellow-traveller, with reference to the close connection between perception and mind. He is also called the rapid As, and Long-foot, in allusion to the far-reaching activity of perception in space; in other words, Hœnir operates in space as Odin does in time. He is also called Aur-konúngr[1], king of matter[2]. Loðr (Löðr) is, without doubt, related to lá, *blood*, litr, *colour*, A. S. wlite, and expresses the motion of the fluid with its consequences, vital warmth and colour.

The beings different from men are—besides the giants, the oldest of all, and the Æsir, who created heaven and earth, and preserve all things—the Elves and Vans (Alfar and Vanir)[3]. The Elves are the subordinate powers of nature; some of them, the Light-elves (Liósálfar) are airy, light beings, hovering over, and, as it were, protecting the earth: in other words, they are the powers that operate on all that thrives in air, in plants, in rivers, and on the earth's surface. Others, Dark-elves (Döckálfar, Svartálfar), dwell in the bowels of the earth, and are nearly related to, if not identical with, the Dwarfs, or powers that work in stones, earth, metals: they are skilful workers in metal[4]. The whole transition from the hard, dark stone, through the glittering metals, to the germinating powers in the earth, which develop themselves in the fairest, coloured, fruitful forms—the plants—seems represented by

[1] From aur, *argilla, lutum*. Finn Magnusen (Lex. Myth. p. 464) would read ör-konúngr, *sagittarum rex*, from ör, *sagitta, telum*.

[2] Skáldskap. 15. [3] Pages 25, 14. [4] Page 38.

the gradual transition through Dwarfs (stones), Swart-elves (metals), Dark-elves (earth and mould), Light-elves (plants). Between the Æsir and the Elves are the Vanir. Their creation is nowhere spoken of; they are the powers of the sea and air; as active beings they appear only in their relation to the Æsir and Elves, that is, to heaven and earth. They made war against and concluded peace with the Æsir, and one of them, Frey, obtained the sovereignty over the Light-elves [1]. The Vanir rule in the sea and air, encircling the whole earth in a higher and remoter sphere. The Light-elves rule in the rivers and air, surrounding the inhabited earth in a lower and more contracted sphere.

Illustration.—Besides the before-mentioned appellation of Þurs (Goth. þaursus, *dry*; þaursjan, *to thirst*), the giants are also called jötunn, *pl.* jötnar (A. S. eoten, Lat. edo, edonis), from at eta, *to eat*, thus signifying *the voracious, greedy* [2]. These beings use stones and fragments of rock as weapons, and, within the mountains, iron bars also. Among the common people the belief is still lively, how mountains, islands, etc. have arisen through their wanderings, how they hurled vast stones and rocks, and how they fled before the husbandmen. The giants dwell in large caverns, in rocks and mountains, and are intelligent and wise, for all nature has proceeded from them; voracious, large, powerful, proud, insolent [3]: were it not for

[1] Page 25.

[2] Ic mesan mæg · mealtlicor · and efan eten · ealdum þyrre (þyrse), *I can feast and also eat more heartily than an old giant.* Cod. Exon. p. 425, l. 26–29.

[3] They are represented as having many hands and heads: Stærkodder had six arms; in Skirnis-tór a three-headed Thurs is mentioned. Of their relative magnitude to man an idea may be formed from the following. "At the entrance of the Black forest, on the Hunenkoppe, there dwelt a giantess (hünin) with her daughter. The latter having found a husbandman in the act of ploughing, put him and his plough and his oxen into her apron, and carried the 'little fellow with his kittens' to her mother, who angrily bade her take them back to the place whence she had taken them,

Thor, they would get the mastery, but he stands between them and heaven, and strikes them down when they approach too near. Like nature, which is still or agitated, the giant at rest is blunt and good-humoured; but when excited, savage and deceitful. This latter state is called jötun-móðr (giant-mood) in contradistinction to ás-móðr (As-mood). The giantesses are sometimes described as large, ugly, and misshapen, like the giants; sometimes as exceedingly beautiful, exciting desire among the gods, who long to unite with them in marriage. Such a one was Gerd[1]. Of these the gygr (*pl.* gygjur) is represented as inhabiting mountain-caves, and guarding the descent through them to the nether world. Thus it is related, that Brynhild, after her death, when on the way to Hel, came to a giantess, who thus addressed her: "Thou shalt not pass through my courts upheld by stone[2]." Such a giantess was Saxo's Harthgrepa[3] (O. Nor. Harðgreip). Thor also came to the giantess Grid, the mother of Vidar, on his way to Geirröd, or the Iron-king[4]. Vidar, as we shall see hereafter, ruled in a wood above ground, the giantess dwelt at the entrance of the cavern, Geirröd in its depth. It will now appear what is meant by the class of giantesses called Járnviðjur (*sing.* Járnviðja). These dwelt in the Járnviðr (Iron wood), where Fenrir's offspring were brought forth, the wolves that will swallow the sun and moon[5], and cause calamity above, as the wolf Fenrir in the deep. Jarnsaxa, one of Heimdall's mothers, was of this number[6]. The lord of this impenetrable forest was Vidar. In all this dead inert nature seems to be depicted,

adding, 'They belong to a race that can inflict great injury to the giants.'" See Grimm, D. M., p. 506, where other examples are given; see also the story of Thor's journey to Jötunheim.

[1] Page 46.
[2] Helreið Brynhildar, Str. 1.
[3] Page 36, ed. Müller, Skáldskap. p. 210.
[4] Skáldskap. p. 113.
[5] Page 7.
[6] Page 28.

but at the same time, how it is subjected to the higher power of the gods, who, as soon as they came into existence, began and ever continue to operate on it. And in general, it must be remarked, that the giants are not merely beings dwelling in Utgard, or on the edge of the earth, but are all nature, in opposition to the gods.

The Vanir.—Their name is to be traced in the adjective vanr, *empty, vanus*; though they rule also in the water. In all the Gothic and Slavonian tongues a relationship is found between the denominations of wind and water and weather. That the Vanir ruled over the sea appears manifestly from Niörd; that they ruled in the air may be inferred from their seeing Gna riding in the air [1].

The Elves and Dwarfs are not clearly distinguished from each other. The Light-elves border on the Vanir, the Dark- or Swart-elves on the dwarfs. According to the popular belief, the elves (elle-folk) dwell by rivers, in marshes, and on hills; they are a quiet, peaceful race. The etymon of the word dvergr (durgr), *dwarf*, is unknown, but their habitation in stones, down in the earth, and their occupation in smith's work, remove all doubt as to their nature. They were created from the earth, or Ymir's body [2]. The name of their chief Módsognir signifies *the strength-* or *sap-sucker*; the second, Durin, *the slumbering*, from dúr, *slumber*. From Lofar, *the graceful, comely* (?) descend those of the race of Dvalin (*torpor*). It was this family that wandered from their rocky halls, where they lay in a torpid state (í dvala), over the clay-field, to Jóra's plains. If the word Jóra be here taken in its usual acceptation of *conflict*, then by jóru-vellir will be meant *fields of contest, men's habitations*; but, at all events, the contest shows that the development of nature is here intended, from the lifeless stone, through the fertile earth,

[1] Page 35. [2] Page 9.

to the plant and tree; so that these beings seem to have presided over the transition from unorganic to organic nature. To this interpretation their names, as far as we can explain them, are particularly favourable: Móinn, *earth-dweller*; Draupnir, *the dripper*, or *former of drops*; Glói, *the glowing, glittering, giver of colour*; Hliódálfr, *the elf of sound*. The dwarfs work in the service of the gods, and their productions are emblems of the different agencies of nature. Of these the sons of Ivaldi are particularly named, who made the artificial hair of Sif, the ship Skidbladnir for Frey, and the spear Gungnir for Odin; while Sindri and Brock made Frey's hog with golden bristles, the ring Draupnir and the hammer Miölnir[1]. Thus they wrought both in the vegetable kingdom and in metals. Odin, it is said, cut or engraved runes for the Æsir, Dvalin for the elves, Dain for the dwarfs[2]. That the elves and dwarfs are blended together, appears not only from this passage, where Dvalin, a dwarf, is named as the teacher of the elves, but from the list of names in the Völuspá. Without the earth, we meet with the dwarfs Northri, Suthri, Austri, and Vestri, the four cardinal points of the compass; also Nýi and Nithi, the increasing and waning moon, mere ideas, which are referred to the dwarfs as representing the subordinate powers[3].

There are nine worlds[4], and as beings inhabiting them, the following are named: Æsir, Vanir, Men, Elves, Dwarfs, Jötuns, Halir, or inhabitants of Helheim. These nine worlds are, 1. Muspellheim, the furthest towards the south, inhabited by Surt and Muspell's sons: it is the highest heaven, with light, warmth and fire, and older than either heaven or earth; 2. Asgard or Godheim, the

[1] Pages 38, 39. [2] Runatalsþ. Oþins, Str. 6.

[3] Page 5. It is singular, what Keyser remarks, that the Eddas omit all mention of the creation of animals.

[4] Alvísmál, Str. 9.

world of the Æsir or gods, heaven; 3. Vanaheim, or the abode of the Vanir, 4. Midgard or Manheim, the world of men, the middlemost inhabited part of the earth; 5. Alfheim, or Liós-álfheim, inhabited by the elves; 6. Svart-álfheim, inhabited by swart-elves and dwarfs; 7. Jötunheim, or Utgard, inhabited by jötuns or giants, the uttermost boundary of the earth; 8. Helheim, inhabited by those dead who go to Hel, the world of spectres; 9. Niflheim, the world of mist, the furthest north, and the nethermost, uninhabited, older than heaven and earth [1].

Illustration.—The nine worlds mentioned in the Alvísmal must not be confounded with the nine over which the gods gave dominion to Hel, which are identical with the nine worlds below Niflheim, where the Halir or subjects of Hel wander about [2]. She acquired the dominion over a portion of Niflheim, and that she had nine worlds to rule over, means simply that her realm was boundless. Some explain the nine worlds thus: 1. Muspellheim, the abode of Muspell's sons; 2. Alfheim, of the Light-elves; 3. Godheim, of the Æsir; 4. Vanaheim, of the Vanir; 5. Vindheim, of souls; 6. Manheim, of men; 7. Jötunheim, of giants; 8. Myrkheim, of dwarfs; 9. Niflheim, of spectres. But Vindheim is the same as Vanaheim, and is not inhabited by souls, who go either to Valhall or to Hel. Others place Alfheim, or Liós-álfheim, either, as here, after Muspellheim, or even above it. This collocation is founded on Gylfaginning 17, where, in speaking of the heavenly dwellings, after mention made of Gimli, it is said that there is a heaven, Andláng, above Gimli, and above that another, Viðbláin (wide-blue); "and we believe that the Light-elves alone now inhabit those places." But the text of Snorri seems to have been here made up by additions at different times; for the state of things there alluded to is evidently what is to take place after Ragna-

[1] Page 3. [2] Page 50. Vafþrúdnism, Str. 43.

röck; as not until then will either good men inhabit Gimli, or the elves Andláng and Viðbláin. Not until after Ragnaröck, will men, elves, and giants, the beings who till then had dwelt on earth, come to their heavenly abodes. This is, moreover, clear from the circumstance, that not till the conclusion of the chapter above-mentioned of Gylfaginning, is there any mention of the heavens, Andláng and Vidbláin, but previously the abode of the Light-elves in Alfheim is spoken of.

Heaven and Earth.—The ideas of these are formed in accordance with their seeming figure. Outermost was the ocean, on which Utgard bordered. In the middle of the earth was Midgard. Above all Asgard raised its head, first on earth, but afterwards, it would seem, transferred to heaven. This scheme is a perfect image of the *Thing*, or popular assembly, around the king's exalted seat. He was immediately encircled by his priests and officials as Odin by the Æsir. Without them stood the people or free men; outermost of all was the circle of thralls. In like manner the holy offering-tree, with its three branches and its sacred spring, whence oracles were issued, was transferred to heaven. By one of Yggdrasil's roots are the spring and dwelling of the Norns [1], like the priestesses or Valas on earth. There the will of the fates is to be learned, to which even the gods themselves are subjected; by another of its roots is Mimir's spring [1], where is the wisdom of the deep; by the third root are serpents, herein also resembling the earthly tree, by which serpents were fed. Between the giants and the gods there is a river named Ifing, which never freezes [2], that is, the atmosphere; but from the abode of men a bridge leads up to the latter, herein again resembling the earthly temples, built probably on an isle, and accessible only over a sacred bridge. The guardian of the bridge was Heim-

[1] Page 12. [2] Page 11.

dall, who from the river Giöll, the horizon, raised his Giallar-horn, which is kept under the tree Yggdrasil[1]. But there was another guardian, Mimir, at the descent into the nether world, at the junction of heaven and sea, in the north, as the abode of night, and the region where the inhabitants of the North found the country surrounded by the sea. The spring of the Norns is that of superhuman wisdom, Mimir's that of sublunary. Odin must possess both. With his one eye, the sun, he saw all that passed in heaven and on earth; but the secrets of the deep he must learn, either by sinking, as the sun, into the sea, or by getting possession of Mimir's head, as the seat of subterranean wisdom.

Illustration.—Iſing.—The name of this river seems derived from the verb at ífa, which now signifies *to doubt*, though the primitive idea has probably been *to totter, to move from place to place*; Iſing will then signify that which is in constant motion, like the air, which also never freezes. Bifröst is the rainbow, from at bifa, *to tremble, swing*, and röst, *a measure of length, mile*. Yggdrasil has never been satisfactorily explained[2]. But at all events, the sacred tree of the North is, no doubt, identical with the 'robur Jovis,'

[1] Page 29.

[2] The ash Yggdrasil is an emblem of all living nature. The name is obscure, but may be explained. Ygg's, i. e. Odin's, horse, seat, or chariot, from Ygg, a name of Odin, and drasill or drösull, from draga, *to bear*, &c. Living nature is regarded as moved and ruled by the divine power, which has its seat in it as the soul in the body. The word thus explained is in perfect accordance with the old skaldic notions, and the myth seems a poetic allegory throughout. The image accords with their cosmogony. In the tree's top sits an eagle, the emblem of spirit or life; at its root in Hvergelmir lies Nidhögg, the serpent of darkness and death; but the squirrel Ratatösk runs up and down the trunk, carrying rancorous words between the eagle and the serpent; i. e. contending powers move in nature, and false malice steals with its calumny through human life, and disturbs its peace. The fundamental idea seems to be the great strife that pervades worldly life, the strife between spirit and matter, good and evil, life and death. Keyser, Relig. Forfatn. pp. 24, 25.

or sacred oak of Geismar, destroyed by Boniface[1], and the Irminsul of the Saxons[2], the *Columna universalis*, the terrestrial tree of offerings, an emblem of the whole world, as far as it is under divine influence. The giant-powers and the children of death are not overshadowed by it. But the gods, as well as mortals, must have their offering-tree, and one naturally of far greater magnitude. The animals described as living in the tree, bear, without doubt, an allusion to real symbols on the terrestrial one; but unfortunately nothing worthy to be called a description of this tree has reached our time. There was on it a sort of weathercock, which is, perhaps, alluded to by the hawk Vedurfölnir. As from the ash Yggdrasil three roots issue in different directions, so from the Irminsul proceeded three or four great highways. According to the old scholiast on Adam of Bremen, such a tree—which was green both summer and winter—stood near the ancient temple at Upsala; near which was the sacred spring, into which the offerings were sunk[3]. Ratatösk is a name of very doubtful etymon. Finn Magnusen would derive it from at rata, *vagari*, and tauta, *susurrare*, therefore (an animal) going up and down, whispering tales of strife between the serpent and the eagle. The names of the four harts are also the names of dwarfs, viz. Dáin, *swooning*; Dvalin, *torpid*; Duneyr, *the noisy, maker of din*? Durathrór, *the door-breaker*? Nidhögg (of very doubtful etymon) is *the gnawing serpent*. The whole tree and its inmates are significant, but an allegorical interpretation of them is no longer possible. The myth is both Indian and Lamaic. It is the tree of life, which gathers around it all higher

[1] Grimm, D. M. pp. 62, 63, from Willibaldi Vita Bonifacii.

[2] Grimm, D. M. p. 106, who gives the following passage from Ruodolf of Fulda: "Truncum ligni non parvæ magnitudinis in altum erectum sub divo colebant, patria eum lingua *Irminsul* appellantes, quod Latine dicitur *universalis* columna, quasi sustinens omnia."

Ed. Lindenbr. p. 61.

creatures in one worship, as the earthly offering-tree assembled all followers of the same faith under its overshadowing branches.

The goddesses of fate are called Norns[1]. The word Norn does not occur in any kindred dialect. They decide the fate of the hero, while they twist or spin the threads of destiny, and the extent of his dominion, by fastening and stretching it from one quarter of the earth to another[2]; and herein they resemble the spinning Μοῖραι or Parcæ, only that the Northern picture is more comprehensive. Their functions are *to point out, show*, and *to determine*; they show or make known that which was destined from the beginning, and determine that which shall take place in time. Of the Fylgiur and Hamingiur, a sort of guardian angels, that accompany every mortal from the cradle to the grave, we have already spoken[3]. Nearly allied to, and almost identical with the Norns, are the Valkyriur. They are also called Valmeyiar (battle-maids), Skialdmeyiar (shield-maids), Hialmmeyiar (helm-maids), and Ôskmeyiar, from their attendance on Odin, one of whose names is Ôski. They spin and weave like the Norns. In Niáls-saga[4] we read that Darrad (Dörruðr) looking through a chasm in a rock, saw women singing and weaving, with human heads for weights, entrails for woof and warp, swords for bobbins, and arrows for comb. In their appalling song they designated themselves Valkyriur, and announced that their web was that of the looker-on, Darrad. At last they tore their work in fragments, mounted their horses, and six rode southwards, and six northwards[5].

The origin of the name of Mimir is unknown, and the

[1] Page 12. [2] Helgakv. Hundingsb. en fyrri, Str. 2–4.

[3] Pages 113, 115. [4] Cap. 158.

[5] On this Grimm (p. 397) not inaptly observes: "So at least may be understood the words 'vindum vindum vef Darraðar,' though the whole story may have its origin in a 'vef darraðar' (tela jaculi). Comp. A. S. darroð, *a dart*." The story has been beautifully versified by Gray.

myth concerning him differs in the several sources. According to the Ynglinga-saga[1], he was slain by the Vanir[2], but of his fate no traces are to be found in either Edda. There was a tree apparently connected with Mimir, called Miótviðr, which is usually rendered by *Middle tree*, and is considered identical with Yggdrasil; but Mimir dwelt under Yggdrasil's root. In the Völuspá[3], the context evidently shows that the nether world is spoken of; here Miótviðr appears manifestly to signify the tree of knowledge[4]. In the obscure Fiölsvinnsmal[5], Mímameiðr (Mimir's tree) is spoken of, which spreads itself round all lands, is not injured by fire or iron, but few only know from what roots it springs; neither then is this Yggdrasil, whose roots are known. In the following strophes it appears that it went deep down to the nethermost region of earth. Here mention is also made of Thrymgiöll[6], *a gate or lattice*, made by Sôlblindi's (Night's) three sons. The meaning of all which seems to be, that, besides the heavenly tree, Yggdrasil, there was a tree under the earth, whose roots were lost in the abyss, and whose top spread itself in the horizon around all lands, on the limit of the upper and nether worlds; and it was on this tree that Odin hung for nine nights, of whose roots no one had knowledge[7]. The rivers Giöll and Leipt flow near to men, and thence to Hel[8]. Giöll (Ger. Gall = Schall) signifies sound; it probably means the horizon, and has reference to the popular belief of the sun's sound, when it goes down[9], and when it rises, or when day breaks forth. Leipt—the name of the other river— signifies *lightning, flash*. Both words may then denote the glittering stripe of the horizon.

[1] Cap. 4. [2] Str. 2, 47. [3] Str. 50.
[4] Page 79. [5] Str. 20, 21. [6] Str. 10, 11.
[7] Runatalsþ. Str. 1. [8] Grimnism. Str. 28.
[9] 'The skreik of day.' *Hunter's Hallamshire Glossary*. Our 'break of day.' (?) See Grimm's remarks on the A. S. word wóma (dæg-wóma, dægréd-wóma) in 'Andreas und Elene,' p. xxx. and D. M. pp. 131, 132.

Mimir is also called Hoddmimir[1], which has been rendered *Circle-Mimir* or *Sphere-Mimir*, as alluding to the circle of the horizon. Awaiting the regeneration of mankind, the original matter of the new human race will be preserved in Hoddmimir's holt or wood[2]. This explanation is confirmed by the Sólarljóð[3], where it is said, "in full horns they drank the pure mead from the ring- (circle-) god's fountain." According to a popular belief in Germany, Denmark and England, a golden cup, or hidden treasure lies where the rainbow apparently touches the horizon. This seems a remnant of the belief in Mimir's spring, in which wisdom's golden treasure was concealed[4].

War burst forth in the world when men pierced Gullveig (gold) through with their spears, and burnt her in the high one's hall[5]. That is, when they hammered and forged gold, and bestowed on it a certain value, then the

[1] It is far from certain that Mímir and Hoddmímir are identical.

[2] Page 84. [3] Str. 56.

[4] The name Mimir signifies *having knowledge*, and seems identical with A. S. meomer, Lat. memor. The giants, who are older than the Æsir, saw further into the darkness of the past. They had witnessed the creation of the Æsir and of the world, and foresaw their destruction. On both points the Æsir must seek knowledge from them, a thought repeatedly expressed in the old mythic poems, but nowhere more clearly than in the Völuspá, in which a Vala or prophetess, reared among the giants, is represented rising from the deep to unveil time past and future to gods and men. It is then this wisdom of the deep that Mimir keeps in his well. The heavenly god Odin himself must fetch it thence, and this takes place in the night, when the sun, heaven's eye, is descended behind the brink of the disk of earth into the giants' world. Then Odin explores the secrets of the deep, and his eye is there pledged for the drink he obtains from the fount of knowledge. But in the brightness of dawn, when the sun again ascends from the giants' world, then does the guardian of the fount drink from a golden horn the pure mead that flows over Odin's pledge. Heaven and the nether world communicate mutually their wisdom to each other. Through a literal interpretation of the foregoing myth Odin is represented as one-eyed. Keyser, Relig. Forfatn. pp. 25, 26.

[5] Page 14.

idea of property arose, a distinction between *mine* and *thine*, and Heidi (Heiþi, from heiðr, *honour, dignity*) or riches awakened desire.

Odin is Allfather, the universal ruler over all, his nature is, therefore, manifold. He is the world's creator, the father of time, the lord of gods and men, and of all nature, the god of heaven, the king of the year, the god of war, and giver of victory. He operates through heaven and earth, but, at the same time, allies himself with the giants and powers of the deep, as the spirit that operates throughout the material world. And from all these relations his sons proceed, who are a part of his essence. He is heaven; his eye, the sun, looks out over all on earth, and at night beholds all in the deep. He has connection with Earth, and becomes the father of Thor, the thunder. He who quickens all nature has intercourse with the giant powers, and begets the unperishing Vidar[1]. As god of time and king of the year, he with Frigg[2] begets Baldur[3], the bright summer. Höd also, the dark nights of winter, who slays Baldur[4], and Vali[5], the forthcoming new year, who avenges him, are likewise his children. As lord of the intellectual world he is father of Bragi[6], the god of eloquence and poetry. As god of war, or father of hosts (Heriaföðr), he begets Hermod[7], the spirit, who goes on his messages; sends Týr[6], the god of valour and honour, into the heat of battle; and his maidens, the Valkyriur, choose the heroes that shall be his guests in Valhall, the hall of the chosen. He is the heavenly image of earthly kings, surrounded by his men, the Æsir, with his skald, Bragi[6], and his supreme judge, Forseti[8]. As ruler of heaven, he dwells in Valaskiálf[9], and sits on a throne in Hlidskiálf[9]. As the Einheriar's prince, he dwells in Glads-

[1] Pages 29, 84. [2] Page 31. [3] Page 22.
[4] Pages 29, 74. [5] Page 76. [6] Page 28.
[7] Page 21. [8] Page 30. [9] Page 11.

heim[1], and gathers them around him in Valhall. As king of mind, he daily visits Saga, the goddess of history, in her abode, Söckquabeck[2]; and this, his mental dominion, is further indicated by his ravens, Hugin and Munin[3] (thought and memory). Odin is described as a tall, one-eyed old man, with a long beard, a broad-brimmed hat, a wide, blue or variegated, rough cloak, with a spear (Gungnir) in his hand, and the ring Draupnir on his arm. On his shoulders sit his two ravens, his two wolves lie at his feet, and Charles's wain rolls above his head. He sits on a high seat (as he was represented at Upsala), whence he sees over the whole world.

The following account of his appearing to King Olaf Tryggvason is particularly interesting.

"The first evening that King Olaf kept Easter at Ögvaldsnæs, there came an old man, of very shrewd discourse, one-eyed, of sombre look, and with a broad-brimmed hat. He entered into conversation with the king, who found great pleasure in talking with him, for he could give information of all countries both ancient and modern. The king asked him about Ögvald, after whom the naze and the dwelling were called, and the old man told him about Ögvald and the cow that he worshiped, seasoning his narrative with old proverbs. Having thus sat until late in the night, the bishop reminded the king that it was time to retire to rest. But when Olaf was undressed and had lain down in bed, the old guest came again and sat on the footstool, and again conversed long with him; for the longer he spoke the longer did Olaf wish to hear him. The bishop then again reminded the king that it was time to sleep. Unwilling as he was, for he was very loth to end their conversation, he nevertheless laid his head on the pillow, and the guest departed. Scarcely however was the king awake, before his first thought was his guest,

[1] Page 11. [2] Page 34. [3] Page 19.

whom he ordered to be called, but he was nowhere to be found. It now was made known that while preparations were making for the feast, there came an elderly man, whom no one knew, to the cook, and said they were cooking some bad meat, and that it was not fitting to set such on the king's table on so great a festival; and thereupon gave him two thick, fat sides of an ox, which he cooked with the other meat. The king commanded them to burn the whole together, to cast the ashes into the sea, and prepare some other food; for it was now manifest to him that the guest was the false Odin, in whom the heathens had so long believed, and whose tricks he now saw[1]."

Illustration.—The name Odin (Óðinn, Ohg. Wuotan) has been satisfactorily interpreted. It is derived from vaða, *to go*, Lat. vadere, pret. óð, or strictly, vóð; whence the double participle óðinn and óðr, *the impetuous disposition or mind*. Hence it denotes *the all-pervading, spiritual godhead*. In accordance with this interpretation are the words of Adam of Bremen: "Wodan, id est, furior" (furor?). In the Grisons, Wut signifies *idol*. The Wüthendes Heer (Wild Hunt) of the Germans is ascribed to Odin. To the god of war the name is also appropriate, as at vaða uppá signifies to attack in battle. He pervades not only the living, but the dead. Nine songs of power (fimbul-lióð) he learned from Bölthorn, Bestla's father[2]; obtained possession of Mimir's head[3], and embraced Gunnlöd[4]; he is likewise the lord of spectres (drauga drottinn)[5]. It is also said, that by the aid of certain incantations, sung by the dwarf Thiodreyrir, the Æsir acquired power or strength (afl), the elves fame, advancement, prosperity (frami), Hróptatýr or Odin thought, reflection (hyggia)[6]. Odin's oldest habitation was Valaskiálf,

[1] Saga Olafs Tryggv. quoted by Petersen, N. M., p. 161.
[2] Runtalsþ. Str. 3, and page 4.
[3] Page 15.
[4] Page 42.
[5] Page 15, *note* [5].
[6] Runatalsþ. Str. 23.

which he built for himself in the beginning of time[1]. The signification of this word is extremely doubtful. Grimm is inclined to consider the first part of the compound as identical with Val in Valhall, Valkyria, and bearing an allusion to Odin's own name of Valfaðir; skiálf (which signifies *tremor*) he regards as expressing the trembling motion of the air, like the first syllable of Bifröst[2]. Another derivation is from the verb at væla, *to build with art*, whence comes the participle valr, *artificially built, round, vaulted*[3]. This interpretation is, moreover, corroborated by a passage in the Grimnismál[4]. Skiálf may also be interpreted *bench, seat, shelf*. His throne in Valaskiálf was Hlidskiálf (from lið, *door, window, lid*) and skiálf as above. As god of war, Odin's abode was in Gladsheim (the home of gladness and splendour). There is his hall Valhall (from valr, *the fallen in battle*), of kindred origin with the first syllable in Valkyria; *a chooser* (fem.) *of the fallen*. Here we meet with the goat Heidrun (from heiðr, *clear, serene*, and renna, *to run, flow*), that is, *the clear, heavenly air*, whence mead comes, like honey-dew, from Yggdrasil's top. By the goat may possibly be typified the whiteness and abundance of sustenance. The tree Lærad (that which produces læ or calm) signifies the higher region of the air, where the winds do not rage. Under the emblem of Eikthyrnir, *the oak-thorned stag* (from eik, *oak*, and þorn, *thorn*), are represented the branches of the tree, that project like the antlers of a stag. From its horn flow many rivers, which are enumerated in the Grimnismál, of which some flow near the gods, others near men, and thence to Hel. Of those that flow near the gods, some are designated *the deep, the wide, the striving, the*

[1] Page 11. [2] D. M. p. 778, *note*. [3] See Hymiskv. Str. 30.

[4] Str. 6.

Valaskiálf heitir,	Valaskiálf it is called,
er vælti sèr	which for himself constructed
Ass í árdaga.	Odin in days of yore.

loud-sounding, etc.; of those that take their course by men, *the friendly, way-knowing, folk-griping, useful, fertilizing, rushing, swelling, roaring*, etc. All these names, as well as the whole context, which begins with the upper air, and ends with the before-mentioned Giöll and Leipt, show that by these rivers nothing more is meant than the higher and lower clouds. Through some of these, too, the Thunder-god must pass on his way to the place of meeting under Yggdrasil, as he could not go over the rainbow without setting it on fire. These are named Körmt and Örmt, and the two Kerlaugar, names which cannot be explained. The foregoing may serve as examples of the old enigmatic, periphrastic way of expressing very simple things, and, I believe, no deeper signification is to be sought for. The chosen heroes were called Einheriar (from einn, *one, chosen, single*, and heri, *lord, hero*), also Odin's Óskasynir[1]; Odin himself, as god of war, being named Óski, *the granter of wishes*[2]. The number of the Valkyriur is sometimes three, sometimes nine, also thirteen, and twenty-seven, sometimes an indefinite number. The youngest Norn, Skulld, was one of them. They crave, and long after war. They are white maidens that ride through the air, from the manes of whose horses dew falls in the valleys, and hail on the high woods[3]. Their names have reference sometimes to war, sometimes to clouds, rain and wind: as Hild and Gunn, *war*; Svafa, *the hovering, impending*; Kara, *wind*; Göll, the same word as the river Giöll; Sigurdrífa and Sigrún, from sígr, *victory*, and drífa, *to drive*. They are also called Óskmeyiar[4]. Odin's spear, Gungnir (from at gúngna, *to shake, brandish*), is a symbol of his warlike might. His horse Sleipnir[5] (from sleipr, *smooth, gliding*) is described as having eight legs,

[1] Gylf. 20. [2] Page 15, *note* [5]. Grimm, D. M. p. 126.
[3] Helgakv. Hatingask. Str. 28.
[4] Oddrunar-grátr, Str. 18. Grimm, D. M. p. 376. [5] Page 36.

whereby it is meant merely to express his great speed, as Odin's horse is mentioned elsewhere as four-footed. Like his shield, Odin's horse was white, in allusion probably to the clearness of heaven. In the myth of Sleipnir's birth, Svadilföri is the winter's cold (according at least to Finn Magnusen), from svað, *a heap of melting snow*, therefore *that which brings sleet and snow-storms*; and the simplest interpretation of a part of the myth is, perhaps, the following. Loki (fire, heat), who was probably desirous of resting a while, persuaded the Æsir to allow the stranger architect (Winter) to raise a fortress of ice, which he began with his assistant, the horse Svadilföri, that is, *the intense cold*. But while he was still engaged on the work, the gods saw that the beauty of life, Freyia, would be lost to them, and the sun and moon hidden in the foul giant's eternal fog. Whereupon they caused Loki to connect himself with Svadilföri, from which union was born the gray colt, Sleipnir (the wind), which demolished the ice-mansion, and soon increased in growth, so that the god of the year (Odin) could mount his steed, the cooling wind of summer[1]. That the wind is betokened is apparent from the popular belief in Meklenburg, that on Wednesday (Woden's day) no flax is weeded, that Woden's horse may not trample on the seed; nor may any flax remain on the distaff during the twelve days of Christmas, lest Woden's horse ride through and tangle it, and that in Skania and Bleking, after the harvest, a gift was left on the field for Odin's horse[2]. It was also on this horse that Odin con-

[1] See a similar tradition from Courland, of the giant Kinte, and his white mare, Frost, in Grimm, p. 516.

[2] Grimm, p. 140. In Lower Saxony also it is customary to leave a bunch of grain on the field for Woden's horse. In the Isle of Möen a sheaf of oats was left for his horse, that he might not by night trample on the seed. Woden occasionally rides also in a chariot. Petersen, N. M. p. 173. Grimm, p. 138.

In Öland, Högrum parish, there lie great stones called Odin's flisor (Odini lamellæ), concerning which the story goes, that Odin being about

veyed Hading across the sea, wrapping him in his mantle, so that he could see nothing[1]. It is on the same white horse that he rides as the Wild Huntsman[2]. In the later sagas (as in that of Hrólfr Kraki), we already find it believed of Odin, that he was an evil and perfidious being, who mingled in the tumult of battle, and caused the fall of warriors. In the middle age, this belief became more and more prevalent. To the singular method, by which, according to Saxo, one might "præsentem cognoscere Martem[3]," a corresponding tradition exists even in the heart of Germany. We are told, that as some people

to feed his horse, took the bit from his mouth, and laid it on a huge block of stone, which by the weight of the bit was split into two parts, that were afterwards set up as a memorial. According to another version of the story, Odin, when about to fight with an enemy, being at a loss where to tie his horse, ran to this stone, drove his sword through it, and tied his horse through the hole. The horse, however, broke loose, the stone sprang asunder and rolled away, making a swamp called Högrumsträsk, so deep that although several poles have been bound together, they have not sufficed to fathom it. Geijer's Schw. Gesch. i. 110. Abr. Ahlquist, Ölands Historia, i. 37; ii. 212, quoted by Grimm, D. M. p. 141.

A small water-fowl (tringa minima, inquieta, lacustris et natans) is to the Danes and Icelanders known by the name of Odinshani, Odin's fugl. In an Old High-German gloss mention occurs of an Utinswaluwe (Odin's swallow). Ib. p. 145.

[1] Saxo, p. 40.

[2] Grimm, D. M. p. 880.

[3] Saxo, p. 106; Grimm, p. 891. Biarco being unable to perceive Odin on his white horse, giving aid in a battle to the Swedes, says to Ruta:

Et nunc ille ubi sit, qui vulgo dicitur Othin
Armipotens, uno semper contentus ocello?
Dic mihi, Ruta, precor, usquam si conspicis illum?

To which she answers:

Adde oculum propius, et nostras prospice chelas,
Ante sacraturus victrici lumina signo,
Si vis præsentem tuto cognoscere Martem.

Whereupon Biarco replies:

Quantumcunque albo clypeo sit tectus et altum (*l.* album)
Flectat equum, Lethra nequaquam sospes abibit;
Fas est belligerum bello prosternere divum.

Petersen, N. M., cites Orvar Odd's Saga (c. 29) for a similar instance.

were one day walking on the Odenberg, they heard a beating of drums, but saw nothing; whereupon a wise man bade them, one after another, look through the ring which he formed by setting his arm a-kimbo. They did so, and immediately perceived a multitude of warriors engaged in military exercises, going into and coming out of the Odenberg[1]. Many authors have identified the Odin of the North with the Indian Budha; of their original identity there can hardly exist a doubt, though the myths relating to each have naturally taken widely different directions. What I have seen hitherto in opposition to this opinion seems to me to favour, if not confirm it. Schlegel repudiates it because Budha signifies *the Wise*, and is an adjectival form from bud', *to think*; but Oðinn is a similar form from vaða, so that the verbal identity can hardly be greater; the form óðr, *ingenium, anima sensitiva*, agreeing with óðinn, shows also that the signification of both words is one and the same.

The other gods also, as princes, had their horses, though the authorities do not state which belonged to each in particular, and their names bear a close resemblance to each other. They may be rendered the *Shining*, the *Golden*, the *Precious stone*, the *Rays shedding on the way*, *Silver-mane*[2], *Sinew-strong*, the *Ray*, the *Pale of head*, *Gold-mane*[2] and *Light-foot*. Gold-mane was Heimdall's, in allusion to the radiant colours of the rainbow.

War was too weighty an affair not to have, besides the universal ruler Odin, its appropriate deity. This was Týr[3], who, at the same time, was god of courage and honour. He is a son of Odin, but his mother was of giant race, light-browed and radiant with gold[4]. No one equals him

[1] Grimm, p. 891.

[2] Gulltoppr, Silfrintoppr horses were called, whose manes (toppr, Ger. zopf) were intwined with gold or silver. Grimm, p. 623.

[3] Page 28.

[4] Page 67.

in daring; in the midst of the battle's rage, he fearlessly stretches forth his hand decked with the martial gauntlet. He is the Mars of the Northern nations.

Illustration.—Týr is the general appellation of a distinguished divinity, though particularly of the god of military prowess and honour (from týr, tír, *honour*). His name is found in O. Nor. Tígsdagr, Dan. Tirsdag, A. S. Tiwesdæg, Dies Martis, *Tuesday*; also in Tíghraustr, valiant as Týr. The strength of beer, too, is described as blandinn megin-tíri, *medicata magna virtute*[1]. Loki upbraids him with his inability ever to bear a shield, or to use two hands, and further informs him that his wife had a son by him (Loki), and that Týr did not get a rag or a farthing as damages[2]. That Odin is his father and the beautiful giantess his mother, may signify that she is the ennobled giant-spirit which through Odin connects itself with the Æsir-race[3].

Odin's wife was Frigg (the earth). She occurs but rarely under the general appellation of earth, but often under other denominations, according to the several points of view from which she is considered. The supreme among all the goddesses is Frigg, the fertile summer-earth, who more than all others bewails her noble son Baldur's (the summer's) death. Her attendants are Fulla (plenty)[4], a pleasing emblem of the luxuriant aspect of the blooming fields; Hlin, (the mild protecting warmth); and Gna, who as the gentle breeze rides on her swift courser, bearing to every land the produce of the fruitful earth[5]. Under an-

[1] Brynhildarkv. 5. [2] Lokaglep. 38, 40.

[3] Besides numerous names of places, the name of Týr (Týr) appears also in the following names of plants: O. Nor. Tysfiola, *viola Martis*; Tyrhialm, *aconitum*, *monk's hood*, Dan. Troldhat; O. Nor. Tyviðr, Dan. Tyved, Tysved, *daphne mezereon*, *spurge laurel*. Grimm, p. 180. [4] Page 35.

[5] In Sweden, Fyen and some other places, the constellation Orion is called by the common people Frigg's rok (distaff). The orchis odoratissima is called Friggjar-gras and hjona-gras (marriage grass).

other form the earth appears as Rind, the hard-frozen winter earth, with whom Odin begets Vali, the bright, winter days, with clear, hard frost, which passes over to spring. Frigg's rivals are Gerd and Gunnlöd: the first may be regarded as the germinating spring earth, which in seed-time is embraced by Frey; the latter is the autumnal earth, which is embraced by Odin, and gives him Suttung's mead[1], at the time when the labours of summer and warfare are over, when the harvest songs resound in the field, and the shout of warriors in the hall. But neither of these two are strictly earth's divinities. As mother of Thor, the thunder, the earth is called Fiörgyn (Fiörgvin)[2] (Goth. Fairguni[3], *mountain*) and Hlódyn[4], another name for mountain, which when begrown with grass, is represented as Thor's wife, Sif[5].

Illustration.—The general name of the earth is iörð. Frigg or Frygg is related to the Lat. Fruges, the root of which is found in the participle fructus, Ger. Frucht, Dan. Frugt; it therefore denotes the fruitful earth. Her dwelling is called Fensalir, the lower and humid parts of the earth; for as the divinity of the fertile earth, she does not rule over the high, barren mountains. Fulla, *the full, abundant*, the *luxuriant cornfield*, is opposed to Sif, the grass-grown mountain. Hlín or Hlyn (from hly, at hlúa, at hlyna, *calescere*), *the mild, refreshing warmth*. The danger from which she protects is cold. That her name denotes a property of earth, appears from the circumstance, that Frigg herself is also called Hlín[6]. By Gna, and its derivative at gnæfa (to be borne on high) is expressed *motion on high, in the air*; as is also apparent from the

[1] Pages 41 *sqq.*
[2] Page 21.
[3] Grimm, pp. 156, 610, and Pref. to 1st edit. p. xvi.
[4] Page 21, *note*[2].
[5] See p. 21 for other interpretations of Fiörgyn and Hlódyn.
[6] Page 79. Völuspá, Str. 54.

name of her horse, Hófvarpnir (the hoof-caster), and that of its sire, Hamskerpnir (skin-drier), or Hattstrykir (hat-sweeper), and of its dam, Garðrófa[1] (house, or fence-breaker). The word rindr is still used in Iceland to denote barren land. It is the Engl. *rind*. Rind betokens the frost-hardened surface of the earth. Of her son Vali's birth the Eddas supply no details: it is merely said, She gave birth to him í vestur sölum[2] (in the halls of the West), for which a various reading has í vetur sölum (in the halls of winter), which suits remarkably well with Rind. In Saxo[3] we find the chief features of a myth, which has there assumed an almost historic colouring, but evidently belongs to our category. It is a description of Odin's love for Rinda, and forms a counterpart to the myths of Odin and Gunnlöd[4], Frey and Gerd[5]:—"Rostiophus[6] Phinnicus having foretold to Odin, that by Rinda, the daughter of the king of the Rutheni[7], he would have a son, who should avenge the death of Baldur; Odin, concealing his face with his hat, enters into that king's service, and being made general of his army, gains a great victory; and shortly after, by his single arm, puts the whole army of the enemy to flight with immense slaughter. Relying on his achievements, he solicits a kiss from Rinda, in place of which he receives a blow, which does not, however, divert him from his purpose. In the following year, disguised in a foreign garb, he again seeks the king, under the name of Roster the smith, and receives from him a considerable quantity of gold, to be wrought into female ornaments. Of this, besides other things, he

[1] Page. 35.
[2] Vegtamskv. Str. 16.
[3] Pages 126, *sq.* ed. Müller.
[4] Page 40.
[5] Page 46.
[6] Hrossþióf was one of the Frost-giant Hrímnir's children; it is therefore clear that with him it is the middle of winter. Hyndlulj. Str. 31.
[7] The Russians.

fabricates a bracelet and several rings of exquisite beauty, which, in the hope of gaining her love, he presents to Rinda, but by whom he is repulsed even more ignominiously than before. He then comes as a young warrior, but on demanding a kiss, receives a blow which lays him flat on his face. On this he touches her with a piece of bark, on which certain incantations were inscribed, whereby she is rendered as one frantic. He then appears in the guise of a woman, under the name of Vecha, and is appointed to the office of Rinda's waiting-maid. Availing himself of her malady, he prescribes a potion, but which, on account of her violence, he declares cannot be administered, unless she is bound. Deceived by the female attire of the leech, the king orders her to be bound forthwith, when Odin, taking advantage of her helplessness, becomes by her the father of a son," whose name is, not Vali, but Bo (Bous), but who, nevertheless, is identical with Vali, being the avenger of Baldur. The signification of the myth is evident enough, particularly when compared with those allied with it. Rinda is the hard-frozen earth, that repulses Odin; the ornaments which he proffers her, are the glories of spring and summer; as a warrior, he represents war to her as the most important occupation of summer. But by his four appearances are not meant, as some have imagined, the four seasons, but merely the hard winter and its transition to spring. Fiörgynn occurs once as a masculine, viz. as the father of Frigg[1], but elsewhere always as a feminine (Fiörgyn) and mother of Thor. Hlódyn, which also denotes the earth as the mother of Thor, is rightly referred to hlóð, hearth, which is derived from at hlaða, *to heap up, load*[2], pret. hlóð. But Hlódyn does not denote the deity of the hearth, who could not in any way be mother of Thor; while if we only enlarge the idea, it will be clear that the word signifies *a mountain*, that

[1] Skáldskap. 19. [2] Grimm, D. M. p. 235.

which is piled up. In like manner, we shall presently see that another name for mountain, Hrugnir (Hrungnir), comes from at hrúga, *to heap up, to lay stratum upon stratum*. Both Fiörgyn, then, and Hlódyn fundamentally signify the same, viz. *a mountain*; but the idea is viewed under different aspects, sometimes as the compact mass, sometimes as a pile of strata upon strata.

Thor is the god of thunder; he dwells in Thrudheim [1], *the dense gloom of clouds* [2], and sends forth, from time to time, the gleaming lightning from his hall, Bilskirnir. His other names and attributes, as well as those of his attendants, bear allusion to the rapid course of the thunder-storm, terrific sounds, pernicious lightnings, together with the furious winds and deluging rains which accompany them. His crushing hammer [3] denotes the lightning; with that he visits rocks and sea, and nothing withstands its might. His strength is especially expressed by his belt [4], the crash of thunder by his chariot [3]. We often find Loki (fire) in his train, and even as his hand-maiden [1]; for the fire of the clouds is akin to earthly fire, but the latter fights more with craft, the former with force. Thor receives slaves [4], partly, perhaps, as the divinity particularly worshiped by the Fins, before the spread of the As-religion in the North, partly because slaves could not follow their masters to Valhall, but must occupy an inferior place. According to old Finnish usage, bridegroom and bride are consecrated, while the father strikes fire with flint and steel; fire-apparatus is also given to the dead. By the Fins Thor was worshiped as the chief god, and a portion of his worship passed into the As-religion.

As Thor is the thunder-storm, so are his journeys its divers manifestations. As the god of clouds, he is scarcely

[1] Page 21.

[2] Keyser (p. 34) derives Thrudheim from þruðr, *i. e.* þrotr, *strength, endurance.*

[3] Page 22.

[4] Page 55.

ever at home with the Æsir, but visits the giants,—the rocks and mountains,—and it is only when the gods call on him, that he is at hand. Sometimes we find him in conflict with Midgard's serpent [1], which he strikes to the bottom of the ocean, or raises in the air; he hurls the roaring waves against the cliffs that project from the deep, and forms whirlpools in the rocky halls; sometimes he is contending with the giant (mountain) Hrungnir [2], the crown of whose head pierces the clouds, and who threatens to storm the heavens. Thor cleaves his jagged summit, while Thialfi [3], his swift follower, overcomes the weak clay hill by the mountain's side. He also visits the metal-king, Geirröd,[4] passes through the mountain streams into the clefts, and splits their stones and ores. In vain will the giant Thrym [5], groaning in his impotence, imitate the Thunderer; in vain he hopes that the goddess of fruitfulness will be his; he gets neither her nor the Thunderer's might, who despises the powerless matter's presumptuous and bootless attempt. The thunderbolt returns to the hand of the Thunderer. In winter only Thor loses a part of his resistless might: his hammer rests not, but its force is deadened with Skrymir on the ice-rocks [6].

Illustration.—Thórr, as Grimm observes, seems contracted from Thonar, whence the modern Ger. Donner, *thunder*. Hereto belong also the Latin tonus, tonare, tonitru. Thrudheim, or Thrudvang, where he dwells, is from þrúðr, *strong*, strictly, *closely packed together*. Bilskirnir is from bil, *an interval* (*of time or space*), and skír, *clear, bright*; skírnir, *that which illumines, glitters in the air*. The masses, like strata, lying one over another, are represented as the several stories of the dwelling. The rolling thunder is expressed by Thor's chariot, reið (Lat. rheda); whence also the thunder-crash is called reiðar-þruma (the rattling

[1] Page 65. [2] Page 70. [3] From þiálf, *severe labour*.
[4] Page 52. [5] Page 54. [6] Pages 58, *sq*.

of the chariot. The names of the goats, Tanngniost and Tanngrisnir [1], have also a reference to sound; the first from gnist, *gnash*. Thor's chariot is drawn by goats, probably because those animals inhabit the highest mountain-tops; whether they were accounted sacred to Thor, is unknown. The Ossetes, in the Caucasus, a half Christian race, sacrifice a black goat to Elias, and hang the skin on a pole, when any one is killed by lightning [2]. The rapid course and warmth are expressed in Ving-Thor, or the Winged Thor, and in his foster-children, Vingnir and Hlora [1], male and female; the latter is akin to hlær, hlyr, *warm, lukewarm*, and with at hlóa [3], *to glow*. From hlóa or hlóra Thor's name of Hloridi, or Hlorridi [4], is most readily derived, the latter part of which is formed from reið, *a chariot*, as Hallinskeidi [5] is from skeið. Auku-Thor, or Öku-Thor, is by the ancient writers referred to aka, *to drive*, though it is probably no other than Thor's Finnish name, Ukko-Taran. The thunderbolt and the lightning are denoted by the hammer Miölnir, *the crusher, bruiser*, from at mala (mölva, melia), *to crush*. It is also called þruðhamar, signifying, according to Finn Magnusen, *malleus compactus*. Megingiardar [1], from megin, *strength*, is literally *the girth, or belt, of power*. Thor is also called Veor (Vör), and Midgard's Veor [6], the signification of which is extremely doubtful. As followers of Thor, are named Thialfi and Röskva, brother and sister, consequently kindred ideas. Röskva signifies *the quick, active*, and her brother, who ran a race with Hugi [7] (thought), is also a good runner. Thialfi may not improbably denote the rushing thunder-shower, which will well suit his conflict with, and easy conquest of, the clay-giant Möckurkalfi [8]; for it is undoubtedly either the wind that blows him down,

[1] Page 22. [2] Grimm, D. M. p. 159. [3] Grimnism. Str. 29.
[4] Page 21. [5] Page 29. [6] Hymiskv. Str. 11, 21.
[7] Page 61. [8] Page 71.

or the rain that washes him away. The father of Thialfi and Röskva is in Snorri's Edda called a peasant, but in Sæmund's Edda [1], he is designated a hravnbui [2] (sea-dweller), a name well suited to the character just assigned to his son.

The stories of Thor's journeys are chiefly found in Snorri's Edda, though allusions to many of them occur in that of Sæmund. Their mythic import is unquestionable. The giant Hymir (from hum or humr, *the sea*, Gr. κῦμα) [3], is manifestly, both from his name and from the matter of the poem, a sea-giant; he represents the cliffs which stretch themselves out from the land into the vast unfathomable deep, where lies the Midgard's serpent. The drinking cup is smashed against his forehead, viz. the cliffs' projecting summits [4]. The kettle signifies the whirlpool among the rocks. Hrungnir, or Hrugnir (from at hrúga, *to heap up*) is the mountain formed by stratum upon stratum, whose head penetrates the clouds, and contends with heaven.

The following popular tradition from the Upper Thellemark is both interesting in itself and will serve as a further illustration of the story of Thor and Hrungnir.

At the upper end of the long Totak water in the Upper Thellemark is a very remarkable and imposing assemblage of stones which, seen from the water, resembles a town with its gables and towers; of its origin the peasants relate the following story:—

[1] Hymiskv. Str. 35, 'hravn-hvala;' Str. 37, 'hravn-búa,' also Helgakv. Hadingask. Str. 25.

[2] Hravn (Hrón) is the Anglo-Saxon hrón, signifying the ocean. In this sense hrón-rád (the sea-road) is used in Cædmon (pp. 13, 19), and in the Legend of St. Andrew (v. 740) hrón-fixas (sea-fishes), but where it is written 'horn-fixas.' So Beowulf, v. 19, ofer hrón-ráde (over the sea-road).

[3] Olafsen's Nord. Digtek. p. 23. Njála, Ind., Skáldskap. 61.

[4] Page 68.

"On the plain now covered by the stones there were formerly two dwellings, and, as some say, a church, whence the largest stone, which rises amid the others like a church roof, is to this day called the church-stone. In these two dwellings two weddings were once held, at which, according to the old Norwegian fashion, the horn with foaming beer was in constant circulation among the guests. It occurred to the god Thor that he would drive down and visit his old friends the Thellemarkers. He went first to the one wedding, was invited in, presented with strong beer, the bridegroom himself taking up the cask, drinking to Thor and then handing him the barrel. The god was pleased both with the drink itself and with the liberal manner in which it was given, and went greatly gratified to the other wedding party, to taste their wedding beer. There he was treated nearly in the same manner, but a want of respect was manifested in their not pledging him in a general bowl. The god, perhaps a little affected by the deep draught he had taken at the other wedding, became furiously wroth, dashed the bowl on the ground, and went away swinging his hammer. He then took the bridal pair that had presented him with the cask, together with their guests, and set them on a hill, to be witness of and to secure them from the destruction he in his revenge had destined for those who by their niggardliness had offended Asgard's most powerful god. With his 'tungum-hamri'[1] he then struck the mountain with such force that it toppled down and buried under it the other bridal pair with their habitation. But in his anger the god let his hammer slip from his hand, which flew down with the rocky fragments and was lost among them[2]. Thor had therefore to go down and seek after it, and began casting the fragments aside and turning and tugging them until he found his hammer. Hence it was that a tolerably good

[1] Heavy hammer. [2] It did not then return to his hand. See p. 39.

path was formed through the stony heap, which to this day bears the name of Thor's way [1]."

Hrungnir's mountain-nature is also well expressed in the beginning of the narrative: the only beings for whom he entertains a regard, are the goddess of beauty herself, Freyia—whom the giants constantly desire—and Sif, who might clothe the mountains' naked sides with grass. His abode is named Griotunagard [2] (from griót, *stone*, and tún, *enclosure*, Eng. *town*). It lies on the boundary between heaven and earth. The description of the giant himself portrays plainly enough a mountain with its summits; nor does it require illustration that Thor cleaves his skull and the mass of rock, which he holds before him as a shield, with a thunderbolt.

Like his father, Odin, Thor also manifested himself to King Olaf Tryggvason. As the latter was once sailing along the coast, a man hailed him from a projecting cliff, requesting to be taken on board, whereupon the king ordered the ship to steer to the spot and the man entered. He was of lofty stature, youthful, comely, and had a red beard. Scarcely had he entered the vessel when he began to practise all sorts of jokes and tricks upon the crew, at which they were much amused. They were, he said, a set of miserable fellows, wholly unworthy to accompany so renowned a king or to sail in so fine a ship. They asked him whether he could relate something to them, old or new? He said there were few questions they could ask him which he could not resolve. They now conducted him to the king, praising his vast knowledge, when the latter expressed the wish to hear one or other old history. "I will begin then," said the man, "with relating how the land by which we are now sailing was in old times inhabited by giants, but that such a general destruction befell those people, that they all perished

[1] Faye, p. 1. [2] Page 70.

at once, except two women. Thereupon men from the east countries began to inhabit the country, but those giant women so troubled and plagued them that there was no living there until they thought of calling on this Redbeard to help them; whereupon I straightway seized my hammer and slew the two women; since which time the people of the country have continued to call on me for aid, until thou, king, hast so destroyed all my old friends that it were well worthy of revenge. At the same moment, regarding the king with a bitter smile, he darted overboard with the swiftness of an arrow." In this wonderful story we see expressed Thor's hostility to the giants, and their extirpation through him; or, in other words, how by his operation he prepares and facilitates the culture of the earth among mankind[1].

Thor had a daughter named Thrud[2] (Þrúðr), and Hrungnir is called Thrud's thief or abducer (Þrúðar þiófr); also an allusion to a mountain, which attracts the clouds; Thrud, agreeably with what has been already said, being the dense thunder-cloud. Möckurkalfi (from mökkr, *a collection of thick mist or clouds*, and kálfr, the usual expression for any small thing with reference to a greater, as a calf to a cow, though usually applied to a little island lying close to a larger) is a giant of clay, not, like Hrungnir, of stone, and, therefore, denotes the lower earthy mountain. Thor's son, Modi[3], signifies *the courageous*; his other son, Magni[3], *the strong*, may be compared with Odin's son Vali, whose name has the same signification. Both perform mighty deeds immediately after their birth; whence it would seem, as Prof. Finn Magnusen is inclined to suppose, that Magni denotes a god of spring. A similar allusion is contained in the name of Groa, signifying *causing to*, or *letting, grow*. By the star Örvandil's toe[4] is probably

[1] Saga Olafs Tryggvasonar, ii. p. 182.
[2] Pages 22, 34.
[3] Page 22.
[4] Page 71.

meant the small and scarcely visible star over the middle star in the pole of the wain. The frozen toe was, no doubt, the great toe, and is identical with the Dümeke or Hans Dümken (thumbkin) of the northern Germans, which is regarded as the driver of the carriage[1]. The rest of the myth seems inexplicable. Geirröd, who also in the Grimnismal[2] appears as a giant[3], is lord of the ores in the bowels of the earth. His name, as well as that of Grid (Gríðr), the giantess at the entrance of the mountain[4], Jarnsaxa[5] and the like, have reference to metals, and have afterwards passed into names of weapons, as grið, *an axe*[6]; geir (A. S. gar), *a dart*. Gríðarvöllr, *Grid's staff*[4], is also a metal rod. Thrym[7] (the drummer, thunderer) from at þruma, *to thunder, make a thundering noise*, is a fitting name for the giant who would rival the thunderer Thor, and fancied that the goddess of fertility and beauty would fall to his lot. Skrymir, or Skrymnir (from skrum, *show, brag, feint*) designates the crafty, false giant who by his magic deceives Thor. He is supposed to denote winter, a symbol of which is, moreover, his woollen glove[8]. The myth about Utgarda-Loki is probably a later addition, its object being apparently to represent the weakness of the Æsir-gods, in comparison with the Finnish divinity[9].

Thor's wife is Sif[10]. Loki (fire) destroyed her lovely locks, but the dwarfs, sons of Ivaldi[11], who work in the earth, made her a new head of hair, the germinating,

[1] Grimm, D. M. p. 688. [2] Page 17.

[3] See Saxo, p. 420, for the account of Thorkill-Adelfar's perilous and marvellous journey to visit the giant Geruth (Geirröd).

[4] Page 53. [5] Page 28. [6] Egils Saga, p. 443.

[7] Page 54, and *note*.

[8] Page 58. F. Magnusen, Lex. Mythol. pp. 494, 630.

[9] It may rather, perhaps, be regarded as a burlesque on the old religion, composed at a period when common sense began to operate among the followers of the Odinic faith.

[10] Page 34. [11] Page 38.

bright-green grass. Her (but not Thor's) son is Ull (winter), which proceeds from the mountains to the humid valleys. He is Baldur's (the summer's) brother, the deity of the skate or snow-shoe, of the chase, the bow and the shield (which is called his ship), and runs in snow-shoes out over the ocean.

Illustration.—As Frigg has reference to the cultivated earth, so Thor's wife, Sif, denotes the mountains that surround it, but which are uncultivated. Siva, the corresponding deity of the Slaves and Wends, is, on the contrary, represented with an abundance of beautiful hair and crowned with a wreath of flowers, holding a golden apple in one hand, and a bunch of grapes and a green leaf in the other[1]. Here she represented the cultivated earth with its produce, while in the North she retains only her golden hair, and is limited to be the goddess of grass only: while Frigg and Frey preside over the earth's fruitfulness. This appears, too, from the circumstance that Ull is her son. Haddr Sifjar (Sif's head of hair)[2] is a periphrasis for gold. In Saxo[3] there is a fragment of a myth of Oller (Ullur), which is there treated historically. Odin is driven from Byzantium (Asgrad) by Oller, who tyrannizes over Odin's subjects: the latter returns, wins back his dominion by gifts, and Oller is forced to flee to Sweden, where, as it were in a new world, he endeavoured to establish himself, but was slain by the Danes. This story has justly been regarded as a myth of the good dispenser of light, who is expelled by winter, but returns again to his dominion. Saxo in his recital makes mention of a bone, on which Oller could cross the sea, which Finn Magnusen[4]

[1] See a representation of her in Arnkiel, Cimbrische Heyden-Religion i. p. 120; also in Vulpii Handwörterbuch der deutschen Völker, etc., 1826. Tab. III. fig. 1. See also Lex. Mythol. p. 681.

[2] So read p. 34, *note* [3].

[3] Pages 130, 131.

[4] Lex. Mythol. p. 765.

has well explained to be skates, which in the earliest times were made of the bones of horses or oxen[1].

Loki is fire. In the beginning of time he was, as Lodur[2], the mild, beneficent warmth, united with All-father; but afterwards, like a fallen angel, having descended on earth, he became crafty, devastating and evil, like the desolating flame. There he was born in the foliage, and had the wind for his father[3]. His brothers are devastation and ruin. At one time he flutters, like a bird, up along a wall, beats with his wings, and peeps in at a window, but his heavy feet cling to the earth[4]; sometimes he flies, whirled by the storm-wind, over stock and stone, floating between heaven and earth[5]; but while, as Lopt, he is traversing the free air, he, nevertheless, suffers himself to be shut up and tamed by hunger[4]; the humid grass can bind his mouth, and yet his heart is not consumed. It became so when he wrought and begat children

[1] And so in Iceland, even at the present day. The words of Saxo are: Fama est, illum adeo præstigiarum usu calluisse, ut ad trajicienda maria osse, quod diris carminibus obsignavisset, navigii loco uteretur, nec eo segnius quam remigio præjecta aquarum obstacula superaret. p. 131. That such was also the custom in our own country in the 12th century, appears from a curious passage in Fitzstephen's Description of London, of which the following is a translation: "When that great pool, which washes the northern wall of the city is frozen, numerous bodies of young men go out to sport on the ice. These gaining an accelerated motion by running, with their feet placed at a distance from each other, and one side put forwards, glide along a considerable space. Others make themselves seats of ice like great millstones, when one sitting is drawn by many running before, holding each other's hands. During this rapid motion they sometimes all fall on their faces. Others, more skilled in sporting on the ice fit to their feet and bind under their heels the bones, *i. e.* the leg-bones, of animals, and holding in their hands poles with iron points, which they occasionally strike on the ice, are borne away with a speed like that of a bird flying, or an arrow from a bow." The great pool above alluded to afterwards gave place and name to *Moor*-fields.

[2] Page 10. [3] Page 30. [4] Page 52. [5] Page 43.

in the bowels of the earth, with giantesses and jarnvidiur, *i. e.* the metals and combustible parts of the earth. There he begat with Angurboda[1] (the announcer of sorrow), the wolf Fenrir, Midgard's serpent and Hel. The ravenous wolf, (subterranean fire) would have destroyed the world, if the powerful gods had not chained it in the mountain-cavern; but even there the foam issues from its open jaws as a dense vapour, and sparkling smoke. The foul, pernicious Loki was by the gods thrust down into the earth and confined in its caverns; there he yet works, though men notice it only when he moves, for then the earth trembles. The bonds yet hold him, but when they are loosed the gods will lose their sway over the world. Then will Loki come forth with his son Fenrir, whose under jaw is on earth, while his upper jaw reaches heaven[2], and fills all the air with flame. The fire confined in the earth will also cause commotion in the sea; then will the great serpent move itself in the deep, threaten the land and raise itself to heaven. The raging fire will cause death and desolation around it, etc. etc.

Illustration.—The root of the word Loki is found in many languages, as Sansk. lóc (lótsj), *to shine*; Lat. luceo, lux (lucs); Kymr. llug, *fire*; O. Nor. logi, *flame*, etc. He is a mixed being, good and evil, but as terrestrial fire, particularly the latter. He is the cause of almost all evil, wherefore some connect his name with the Greek λοχάω, O. Nor. lokka, *to entice*[3]. His other name, Loptr, from lopt, *air*, Ger. Luft, signifies *the aërial*. In the Völuspá[4] the

[1] Page 31. [2] Pages 79, 81.

[3] Asaloki forms a contrast to all the other gods. He is the evil principle in all its varieties. As sensuality he runs through the veins of men; in nature he is the pernicious in the air, the fire, the water; in the lap of earth as the volcanic fire, in the ocean's depth as a fierce serpent, in the nether world as the pallid death. Hence he is not bound to any individual nature; like Odin he pervades all nature. Petersen, N. M. p. 355.

[4] Str. 55.

wolf Fenrir is called Hvedrung's (Hveðrungs) son; in like manner Hel is called Hvedrung's daughter[1], the signification of which is extremely doubtful. As the terrestrial fire, he has Farbauti for his father, from far, *a ship,* and bauta, *to beat,* therefore *the ship-beater,* an appropriate periphrasis for the wind. For his mother he has Laufey (leafy isle) or Nál, needle (*i. e.* the leaflet of the fir[2]); for his brothers, Bylcist, from bu, *a habitation,* and lesta, *to lay waste*; or from bylr, *storm,* and æstr, *raging*; and Helblindi[3], which is also one of Odin's names. But Loki does also some good: it is he who has almost always to procure what is wanting; he causes the implements and ornaments to be made for the gods, both by the sons of Ivaldi[4], who work in wood, as well as by those who forge[4]. It is fire that sets all things in activity. Loki visits the metal king, Geirröd, who causes him to be confined and nearly starved: both types are in themselves sufficiently clear. Thiassi flies with Loki, who hangs fast by the pole[5]: this is evidently fire, which by the storm is borne through the air. Thiassi has been explained as identical with Thiarsi, from þiarr, *violent, impetuous.* His windy nature is manifest enough, partly as being the father of Skadi[6], and partly from appearing in the form of an eagle, like Hræsvelg[7]. It is the storm in the hollows of the mountains that rushes out, and bears along with it the burning trunks of trees through the air. Snorri's Edda[8] gives two brothers to Thiassi, Idi (Iþi, *brightness, splendour*) and Gang (Gángr, *the gold diffused in the innermost recesses of the mountain*). In the story of Sindri, who forges, and Brock, who stirs the fire, and afterwards closes up Loki's

[1] Ynglingas, 52.

[2] Trees with acicular leaflets, like the fir, cedar, yew and the like, are called needle-trees.

[3] Page 30. [4] Page 38. [5] Page 43.

[6] Page 45. [7] Page 8. [8] Page 45.

mouth [1], Sindri denotes the smith, from sindr, *the red hot sparks that spring from under the hammer*. The name of Brock might also be explained, if we knew how they anciently nourished and quelled the fire in their smithies. It has been interpreted, *dry sedge from marshy places*, but was this in use? By closing up Loki's mouth is signified, that he quenched the fire. In the name of the band Vartari, there is evidently a play on the word vör, *lip*; the other part, tari, is not intelligible. From the whole context, however, it would seem that the allusion is to a fitting mode of preserving fire, of quelling it, when becoming too fierce, and finally, when the forging is over, of quenching it. When Loki came into the abyss he became particularly evil (kyndugr) [2]. This word (from at kynda, *to kindle*, Lat. candeo, cendo, Sansk. cand (tsjand), and hugr, *mind*) is an excellent example of the transition of physical ideas to moral. He is represented as a cow and as a woman, both emblems of bringing forth; and he there gave birth to his terrific offspring. The gods were at length compelled to confine him. He abides as a salmon in Franangur's fors [3] (from fráun, *glistening*). With this may be compared the Finnish myth, according to which, fire produced by the gods falls in little balls into the sea, is swallowed by a salmon, and afterwards found in the captured fish [4]. The glistening appearance of a salmon, its red flesh and quick motion, might easily induce the ancients to say there was fire in it. Loki assumed that shape to be as effectually hidden from the gods as possible, and appeared in fire's most innocent form; but they were too well acquainted with his guile. His son Vali, or Ali (the strong), was by the gods transformed into a wolf, and tore his brother Nari or Narvi (the binding); and Loki was bound with his bowels. Skadi hung a serpent above his head [5].

[1] Page 40. [2] Hyndlulj. Str. 38. [3] Page 77.
[4] Grimm, D. M. p. 577, *note*. [5] Pages 31, 78.

Eitr, as we have already seen, was the most intense cold; the serpent, consequently, is the cold stream that flows from the mountains into the deep. The name of Loki's wife, Sigyn, is plainly from at siga (A. S. sigan), *to sink, fall, glide down*, consequently *a water-course*. It is said that Loki lies under Hvera-lund[1] (the wood or forest of hot-springs), and that his wife, Sigyn, sits "not right glad" with him[2]. Sigyn denotes the warm subterranean springs, which receive the cold stream that comes from Skadi[1]; but when the warm springs, swollen with the mountain-streams, rush violently down upon the fire, then the earth trembles. In Saxo[3] we find traces of this myth, though, according to him, it is Utgarda-Loki that lies bound in a cavern. Angurboda, the mother of Loki's children, denotes *the boder of sorrow* (from ángur, *sorrow*). Fenrir (the inhabitant of the abyss or deep), or Fenrisulf (the howling wolf of the deep), is another form of the subterranean fire—the volcanic. The bands by which he is bound (Læðing, Drómi, Gleipnir)[4] have allusion to strength and pliability. The holm or islet of Lyngvi, which is overgrown with ling or heath, and surrounded by the black lake Amsvartnir, is the fire-spouting mountain[5]. The river Van, or Von, is the ascending smoke. In a Skaldic poem cited by Finn Magnusen[6], several names occur belonging to this place, among others, Víl and Von, two rivers flowing from the mouth of the wolf (signifying, *howl, lament,* and *vapour*), whose lips are named Giólnar (from gióla, *a gust of wind*), consequently the craters of a volcano. Two rivers, Vid (Við) and Van are named in the Grimnismal[7], evidently in allusion to vapour and clouds. The World's Serpent (Miðgarðsormr), or the

[1] Völuspá, Str. 39. Compare Lokaglepsa, Str. 51.
[2] Page 78.
[3] Pages 431, 433.
[4] Pages 50, 51.
[5] Page 51.
[6] Lex. Mythol. p. 340.
[7] Str. 28.

Terrestrial Serpent, or Wolf (Jórmungandr), is the deep ocean. That it is excited by subterranean fire, and thereby becomes baneful, is quite intelligible; but it is by a bold transition that the ancients made fire (Loki) the father of Hel or Death, with whom there is only cold. The dominion, however, over cold she did not obtain until the gods sent her to Niflheim [1]. On the way to her abode lay the dog Garm [2], which bays before Gnipa-hellir [3], a being that both in name and signification (from gerr, *voracious*) answers to Cerberus [4]. This dog seems to have guarded the descent to Hel through the earth; as those taking the way by the Giallar-bru met with the maiden Modgud [5], of whom more when we speak of Baldur.

Baldur the good, with the light or bright brows, is, as almost all have admitted, the warm summer, the season of activity, joy and light. On his life depend the activity and joy of the gods; his death brings sorrow to all, to gods and men, and to all nature. One being only, the evil Loki, the terrestrial fire, loses nothing by Baldur's death, and is, therefore, represented as the cause of it, and as hindering Baldur's release from Hel [6]. Baldur, the light, is slain by the darkness, Höd [7]; the bale-fires blaze at his death; he journeys to Hel, and there is no hope of his return. His mother, the fruitful earth, mourns, and all beings shed tears, all nature is filled with weeping, like the days of autumn. Darkness prevails almost as much by day as by night; but the earth stiffens, and Rind brings forth a son, the powerful Vali [6], so that darkness is again dispelled by pure, clear days. Baldur's wife, Nanna, is the busy activity of summer, its unwearied, light occupa-

[1] Page 50.
[2] Page 78.
[3] Page 81. Lex. Mythol. p. 398; Völuspá, Str. 49; Grimnism. Str. 44; Vegtamskv. Str. 6, 7.
[4] Lex. Mythol. p. 111.
[5] Page 75.
[6] Page 76.
[7] Page 74.

tions[1]. Their son, Forseti (the fore-sitter, president, in the assembly), holds spring, summer, and autumn meetings (guilds), as the maintainer of justice[2]. War, the principal employment of summer, was reserved for Odin himself, as the highest god.

Illustration.—Baldur is referred to the Lith. baltas, *white*; Slav. bel or biel; bielbog, *the white*, or *bright god*. Beauty and goodness are the fundamental ideas contained in the name. Baldur's abode is Breidablik[3] (*the broad glance*). The clear, white light is also indicated by the plant sacred to him, Baldur's brá[4]. Nanna, the name of Baldur's wife, has received various interpretations, among which the least improbable is, perhaps, to derive it from at nenna, *to have a mind, feel inclined*; both nenna and the adjective nennimn, signify *a sedulous worker, one indefatigably active*; hence Nanna would denote the active, summer life. Very appropriately, therefore, is the name of Nönna applied to Idun[5], and that Odin's active maidens, the Valkyriur, are called nönnur herjans[6] (maidens of Odin). Nanna's father is named Nef or Nep, but by Saxo[7] he is called Gevar (Gefr); one of these must be

[1] There is much, as Keyser remarks, to object to in this interpretation of the myth of Baldur, but more particularly the circumstance of Baldur continuing with Hel until the dissolution of the world, while Summer returns annually. The whole story of Baldur and of his bright abode Breidablik, where nothing impure enters, points him out as the god of innocence. His name signifies *the strong*, and alludes to mental strength combined with spotless innocence. The blind Höd will then represent bodily strength with its blind earthly strivings, who, instigated by sin—Loki—unconsciously destroys innocence, and with it die both the desire and activity for good—Nanna. The homicide is avenged by quick-waking reflection:—Höd is slain by Vali: but pure innocence has vanished from this world to return no more, though all nature bewails its loss. Only in the regenerated world will it again predominate. Relig. Forfatn. pp. 45, 46.

[2] Page 30.

[3] Page 23.

[4] Page 22, *note* [2].

[5] Hrafnag. Oðins, Str. 8.

[6] Völuspá, Str. 24.

[7] Pages 82, 111.

erroneous. Nef has not been interpreted, but Gefr is simply *giver*; the father gives, and the daughter operates. Saxo relates how Gevar was treacherously burnt alive by night (nocturno igni) by his jarl (satrapa) Gunno, but that Hotherus (Höd) caused Gunno to be cast on a burning pile [1]; an allusion possibly to the piles kindled at midsummer, or at the end of summer, wherein also lies a myth, viz. how the avocations of summer are interrupted by war (Gunno, gynni, signifying *a warrior*), which, in its turn, is at a stand during the dark winter. Höd (Höðr, *gen.* Haðar) in many compounds, signifies (like the A. S. heaþo) war, or battle [2]; whence it would seem that the idea of war prevails where we might expect to find blindness, or darkness the prominent one. The name of Vali is also of doubtful signification; it may be a derivative of at vala, and the masculine of völva (vala) a prophetess, *Scot.* spae-wife, or it may signify *the strong*; but, at all events, Vali is the new year, which begins with brighter days. In the old Swedish runic calendar, Yule-day is denoted by a child in swaddling clothes with a radiant crown, and the 25th of January, among the modern Norwegians, by Paul the archer, or Paul with the bow (qu. Vali?). In the Danish runic calendars, the same day is noted by a sword, in the Norwegian by a bow, and in the Swedish by a sword and a bow, in remembrance of the arms of Vali [3]. Although Christian ideas may have been mixed up with the first-mentioned of these hieroglyphics, the pagan Vali seems, nevertheless, to be the fundamental one, who was only one day old when he slew Höd [4], and had a bow for his attribute. The ancient Scandinavians admitted only two seasons, summer and winter. Neither spring nor autumn appear as distinct beings, but as transi-

[1] Page 131. [2] Grimm, D. M. p. 204.
[3] Specimen Cal. Gentil. ad calcem Lex. Mythol. pp. 1052, 1060.
[4] Page 76.

tions; Vali may, therefore, be regarded as the transition of the year to spring. The mistletoe shoots forth towards the end of June, flowers in May, and is green all the winter. The Romans were acquainted with it, and among the Gauls, the chief druid, on a certain day in spring, ascended the oak on which it grew, and cut it off with a golden knife[1], that it might not injure Baldur, or that the summer might come without hindrance: a proof of the wide-spread veneration for Baldur, and also a confirmation of the just interpretation of the myth. The giantess Thökt, whose form Loki assumed[2], has been well illustrated by Finn Magnusen, by a saying still current in Iceland: "*All things would weep* (*release by weeping*) *Baldur from Hel, except coal*[3]." The name of the giantess he explains by *tecta, operta*; it will then be derived from at þekja, Lat. tego, *to deck, cover*, whence the adjective þaktr, fem. þökt, Lat. tego, and signify *the covered* (*fire*). Coal knows no other tears than dry sparks; it suffers no detriment from the death of summer, and has no joy in it. Hyrrokin, *the whirling, smoking fire* (from hyrr, *fire*, and roka, *whirlwind*), may have allusion to the manner in which they anciently eased the motion of their ships along the rollers. Litur (Litr) *colour*, whom Thor kicks into the fire, indicates the hue of the flaming fire which dies with the light[4]. The presence of all beings at the funeral pile of summer, in which all, more or less, had had pleasure, is perfectly intelligible; nor is Thor (thunder) inactive on the occasion. The funeral is princely, according to the custom of the North. The watch at the Giallar-bru, Modgud, signifies *the contentious, quarrelsome*. The Giallar-bru is, from what has been said, opposed to the rainbow, and Modgud here, instead of Mimir, to Heimdall. Forseti,

[1] Plinii H. N. xvi. 95.
[2] Page 76.
[3] Allir hlutir gráta Balldur úr Helju, nema kol. Lex. Myth. p. 297.
[4] Page 75.

as has already been observed, denotes a president; his abode is Glitnir (from at glita, *to shine, glitter*), *the shining, glittering,* and betokens the solemnity, sanctity and purity of justice [1].

Bragi and Idun (Iðunn Iþuðr)[2].—Bragi is a son of Odin and husband of Idun, the originator of poetry and eloquence, the most exquisite skald; hug-runes (mind-runes) are inscribed on his tongue; he is celebrated for his gentleness, but more particularly for eloquence and wise utterance. After him poetry is called bragr; and after him men and women distinguished for wisdom of speech are called bragr-men or bragr-women. He is described as having an ample beard, whence persons with a similar appendage are called Skeggbragi (from skegg, *beard*). His wife, Idun, keeps in her casket the apples of which the gods bite when they are growing old; they then again become young, and so it will go on until Ragnaröck. On hearing this relation of Hâr, Gangleri observed: "It is a very serious charge which the gods have committed to Idun's care;" but Hâr answered, laughing at the same time, "It was once near upon bringing with it a great misfortune[1]." (In what it consisted is nowhere said.) For the story of her being carried off by Thiassi see page 44. In the Loka-glepsa[3] Bragi offers a horse and a sword to Loki, if he will desist from raising strife, who in return upbraids him with being, of all the Æsir and Alfar present, the most fearful in battle and the greatest avoider of shot. Idun beseeches her husband to keep peace with Loki, and declares that she will utter no contemptuous words to him, but will only appease her husband, who is somewhat heated by drink. But Loki, who appears very regardless of her gentleness, tells her that she is the most wanton of women,

[1] Gylf. 26. Brynh. Qviða, i. 17. Skáldskap. 10.

[2] Connected with ið, *activity*; iðinn, *active*. Keyser, p. 39.

[3] Str. 12–18.

since she threw her nicely washed arms around her brother's slayer.

At guilds the Bragarfull, or Bragi-cup was drunk. A troll-wife told Hedin that he should pay for his contempt of her at the Bragi-cup[1]. It was the custom at the funeral feast of kings and jarls, that the heir should sit on a lower seat in front of the high seat, until the Bragarfull was brought in, that he should then rise to receive it, make a vow and drink the contents of the cup. He was then led to his father's high seat[2]. At an offering-guild the chief signed with the figure of Thor's hammer both the cup and the meat. First was drunk Odin's cup, for victory and power to the king; then Niörd's cup and Frey's, for a good year and peace; after which it was the custom with many to drink a Bragarfull[3]. The peculiarity of this cup was, that it was the cup of vows, that on drinking it a vow was made to perform some great and arduous deed, that might be made a subject for the song of the skald.

From the foregoing Bragi's essence seems sufficiently manifest, that of Idun is involved in obscurity. One myth concerning her we have already seen (page 41), the other is contained in Odin's Ravens' Song, where she is represented as having sunk down from Yggdrasil's ash to the lower world. Odin then sends her a wolf's guise, and despatches Heimdall, accompanied by Bragi and Lopt, to ascertain from her what she had been able to discover respecting the duration and destruction of the nether world and of heaven; when, instead of answering, she bursts forth into tears, etc. The whole is wrapt in dense obscurity, and all that can be gathered seems to be, "that she is the goddess that presides over the fresh young verdure, and herein to be compared with Proserpine, the blooming daughter of Ceres. She dwells in well-watered

[1] Helga-Qviša Hading. Str. 29, 30. [2] Ynglingas. 40.
[3] Hakonars. goða, c. 16. Full signifies *cup*.

fields (Brunnakr), and keeps in a casket the apples which preserve the gods in eternal youth. When the green vegetation vanishes from the earth, she falls, through Loki, as it is mythically expressed, into the power of Thiassi, but by whom she is again liberated in the spring. Or she sinks down from Yggdrasil, and dwells mute and weeping in the nether world[1]."

Saga is the goddess of history and narration. Her name is from at saga, segja, *to narrate*, that of her abode, Söckqvabek[2] (from sökk, sokkvi, *abyss, gulf*; at sökkva, *to sink, swallow*, in allusion to the abundant and flowing stream of narrative. Söckqvabek signifies literally *the sinking, brook*.

As king of mind, Odin procured for mankind the drink of poesy[3]. The story on this subject has not reached us in its most ancient form. It describes in the usual periphrastic manner of Antiquity, the preparation of the inspiring beverage, must, mead, or beer, which, as long as it belongs to dwarfs and giants, is still earthly, only with Odin does it become inspiring. As god of war, he operates in summer, and then seeks his reward; but the gift of poesy is not easily acquired: Gunnlöd long withstands his embraces; but having partaken of the drink, he rises with an eagle's flight on the wings of inspiration.

Illustration.—The difficulty of this myth lies chiefly in the beginning; though it is sufficiently obvious that it relates to the preparation of the drink[4]. Kvasir is produced from the saliva of the Æsir and Vanir. The Vanir, the spirits of air and water, supplied the watery part, the Æsir the inspiring. This also appears from the story of Geirhild, to whom, when brewing, Odin gave his saliva for barm, and the beer proved of the most excellent kind[5]. Kvasir then is fruit, and his blood must or wort. He died

[1] Müller, Altdeutsche Religion, p. 281.
[2] Page 34.
[3] Page 41.
[4] See Lex. Mythol. p. 542.
[5] Hálfs Saga, cap. 1.

in his own wisdom, and in himself was vapid. The dwarfs that slew him and squeezed out his blood, would consequently be those who stood at the must-press. Fialar's drink sweetened with honey is then the poetic drink, must. But the myth does not end here; it passes on to the preparation of a species of beer, for which it must be assumed that must was also employed. The name Gilling may be referred to at gilja, *to separate*, and in Norse, gil is the vessel into which the beer passes[1]. He enters a boat or vessel, which is upset in the great ocean, or brewers' vat; here the barm is meant; and the wife who is crushed by the millstone, when she is going to look at the sea where her husband was drowned, is the malt, or something similar, that is ground. All this would probably be evident, if only we knew how the ancients prepared their mungat[2], whether it was a sort of beer mixed with must and honey. Suttung (probably for Suptung) seems akin to the English *sup*, an allusion to the drinking tendency of the giant race; while his daughter, Gunnlöd, represents the beverage itself. Her name is compounded of gunnr (A. S. guth) *war*, and laða, *to invite*; therefore *that which invites to war or battle*; the liquor which also inspires the skald to overcome all obstacles in his art. The vessel Odhrœrir (that which moves the mind) expresses the effects of the drink. The same may possibly be the case with the two others, Bodn (invitation) and Sôn (redemption, or reconciliation). Odin now comes forth as Bölverk (from böl, *calamity, hardship, bale*, and virka, *to work*), *one who performs deeds of hardship*. When he causes the reapers to kill one another with their sithes, he represents the god of war; when he enters the service of Baugi, he resembles the reaper who, when the labours of summer are over, is rewarded with song. The giant Baugi signifies *the bowed*,

[1] Hallager, *sub voce*.

[2] A sort of beer; 'cerevisia secundaria.' Biörn Haldorsen, *sub voce*.

but why Bölverk enters his service cannot be explained. The auger or borer, Rati, is derived from at rata, *to find the way*. Hnitbiörg signifies a group of close, impenetrable mountains. This myth, though not wholly devoid of beauty, is, in the form in which it appears in the Prose Edda, as insipid as most of the far-fetched periphrases of the old Northern poetry. It has more than once, in later times, served as the subject of comic fiction.

Vidar[1] is the son of Odin and of the giantess Grid, who dwells in a mountain-cave, and guards the descent to the giant-chieftain's abode in the interior of the mountain[2]. The name of his habitation, Landvidi (the wide, boundless land), marks him for lord of the thick, impervious woods, which, through Odin's power, rear their summits on the huge inaccessible mountains, where axe never sounded, where man's footsteps never trod, where human voice was never heard. Rightly, therefore, is he named the Silent. Vidar is the imperishability of nature, her incorruptible power. Who has ever wandered, or even imagined himself a wanderer, through such forests, in a length of many miles, in a boundless expanse, without a path, without a goal, amid their monstrous shadows, their sacred gloom, without being filled with deep reverence for the sublime greatness of nature above all human agency, without feeling the grandeur of the idea which forms the basis of Vi-

[1] Finn Magnusen rejects the story of Vidar's shoe made of shreds of leather (p. 29) as a nursery tale. For the same reason he might, I fear, have rejected a vast deal more. Keyser derives his name from at vinna, *to conquer*, in allusion to his victory in the last conflict with the gods (p. 82), and thinks he may be an emblem of the regenerative power which is supposed to be in the earth. Therefore is he a son of Odin and a giantess, of spirit and matter; therefore is his habitation Landvidi, *the wide earth*; therefore is he the silent, inactive god in the world's present state. Not until its destruction does he come forth in his strength, overcoming the powers of darkness and destruction, and finally dwells in the regenerated world. Relig. Forfatn. pp. 39, 40.

[2] Pages 29, 53.

dar's essence? This great nature was familiar to Antiquity, which dwelt, as it were, in her lap; and we must feel veneration for the ancients, who neglected not to conceive and ennoble the idea of her infinite creative power, even without any view to man. The blooming fields they glorified in Fulla, the whole cultivated earth in Frigg, the grass-grown mountain in Sif[1]; the boundless woods must also have their divinity. Around the dwellings of men Frey and his elves hold sway. He is mild and beneficent, he loves the earth and its swelling seed; but Vidar is silent and still; after Thor he is the strongest; he moves not among men, he is rarely named among the gods, but he survives the destruction of the world, of the gods, and of mankind. With Earth Odin begat Thor; with Frigg, Baldur; with Rind, Vali; but with a giantess, Vidar, the connection between the eternal creative power of matter and spirit. These gods and these men shall pass away, but neither the creative power in nature, Vidar, nor in man, Hœnir, shall ever have an end.

Illustration.—The name of Vidar is formed from viðr, *a wood, forest*. His abode, Landvidi, is thus described:—

> Begrown with branches
> and with high grass
> is Vidar's dwelling[2].

His leathern or iron shoe has been already described[3], and in the Sagas leather is mentioned as a protection against fire. Hence we find him unscathed presenting the drinking-horn to Loki at Oegir's banquet[4]; nor does the wolf Fenrir harm him, but he seizes it and rends its jaws asunder[5]. All this pronounces him lord of the iron wood.

According to Finn Magnusen's interpretation of this myth, Vidar is neither more nor less than the phenomenon

[1] Pages 31, 34, 35. [2] Grimnism. Str. 17.
[3] Page 29. [4] Loka-glepsa, Str. 10. [5] Pages 79, 82.

typhon, or the water-spout. That this illustration has not met with general approval, will occasion but little surprise. Geijer considers it an excellent example of the *lucus a non lucendo*[1], while Rask approved of it as the best he had seen. But Vidar is not one-footed like the water-spout, nor is it easy to imagine the latter an inhabitant of Landvidi, "begrown with branches and with high grass." In general, as well as in this instance, I have merely endeavoured to represent, as clearly as I could, what I believed to have found in the Eddas, without any wish to give greater weight to my own opinions than to those of others, or than they deserved.

When the Æsir had entered into a league with the Vanir[2], or gods of the air, and received them into their community[3], fertility and abundance prevailed over the earth. Father Niörd is the universal nourishing power in air and water[4]; he rules over the wind and the sea, at least over that portion of it which is nearest to and encircles the earth, and, consequently, over navigation and fishing. As god of the ocean and the wind he appears very manifestly in his marriage with Skadi[5], who would dwell in the mountains of Thrymheim. This myth requires no elaborate explanation, as every one will readily perceive that it represents the alternations of the mild sea-breezes and the rough gales from the mountains.

Illustration.—The origin of the word Niörðr is uncertain; it has been referred to the verb at næra (to

[1] Svearikes Häfder, i. 348.

[2] According to some the myth of the war between the Æsir and Vanir signifies that the light of heaven broke through the dense clouds that originally enveloped the earth, in order to produce fertility, which is supposed to be an effect of the combined powers of heaven and the cloudy atmosphere. Others interpret it as a contest between the fire-worshipers and the water-worshipers, which was ended by the blending of the two religions. Keyser, Relig. Forfatn. pp. 35, 36.

[3] Page 14. [4] Page 24. [5] Page 45.

nourish). He is supposed to be identical with the German goddess Nerthus, the Gothic form of which, Nairþus[1], may be either masculine or feminine[2]. Niörd's habitation is Noatûn, *the place of ships*, i. e. *the sea*, from nór, nós (*vaûs*, navis) *ship*, and tún, *an enclosed place, house and land*. Skaði signifies *the hurtful*. Her habitation, Thrymheim, is from þrymr, *noise, uproar*, and bears allusion to the stormy winds.

Far more conspicuous than Niörd are his children, Frey[3] and Freyia[4], who spread the fructifying power of the air over the earth, and bring abundance around and into the dwellings of men. Frey gives fruitfulness to the earth, Freyia to human beings. Frey rules over the Light-elves, and their united influence brings good years and prosperity. In the most spirited of the Eddaic poems, Skirnir's Journey[5], is described Frey's longing to impart his blessings to the earth. Earth, with the seed deposited in it, as Gerd, resists his embraces. His messenger, Skirnir, who impels the seed forth into the light, vainly promises her the harvest's golden fruit, and a ring dripping with abundance. From her giant nature, not yet quickened by the divine spirit, she has no idea of the benefits that will accrue to her through Frey's love; Skirnir must impress on her mind how, without Frey's embraces, she will to all eternity be the bride of the frost-giant Hrîmnir, and never feel the joys of conception. She yields herself up to Frey, and they embrace when the buds burst in the woods.

Freyia's abode is Folkvang; she has her dwelling amid the habitations of people, and fills them with abundance. Her hall is Sessrymnir, *the roomy-seated*. But her influ-

[1] The identity of the names seems unquestionable; but how is the account here given of Niörd as "the universal nourishing power in air and water," and "as god of the ocean and the wind," etc. to be reconciled with what Tacitus says of Nerthus: "Nerthum, id est Terram matrem, colunt"?

[2] Grimm, D. M. p. 197. [3] Page 25. [4] Page 32. [5] Page 46.

ence is also pernicious; seeing that as many fall through the frantic power of love as before the sword of the god of war. Her chariot is drawn by cats, an emblem of fondness and passion. She longs constantly after Od, *the intoxicating pleasure of love*, and by him has a daughter, Hnos, *the highest enjoyment*. Her tears and ornaments are of gold; for she is beautiful and fascinating even in her grief. She travels far and wide, and assumes many names and forms among the children of men[1], as various as are her operations on their minds: for one is the sacred joy of marriage, whose fruit is a numerous offspring; for another, only the impure pleasure of the senses.

The nature of Frey and Freyia seems quite comprehensible, if we confine ourselves to the accounts in the Eddas, and not mingle with them the ideas of other nations. As god of the year, Frey presides over sunshine and rain, without which no seed would germinate. Frey and Freyia denote, in the Scandinavian and kindred tongues, *Master* and *Mistress*. Frey is particularly represented as lord of men; and Snorri remarks that from Freyia high-born women are called freyior (frúr), Dan. Fruer; Ger. Frauen. The word freyr (the feminine of which is freya) denotes either *the fructifying*, or *the mild, joyous*; Ger. froh. Both these interpretations spring from a common root, which is to be found in many tongues, having reference to earthly fertility, enjoyment, joy, etc.; comp. Lat. fruor, frumentum.

Frey obtained dominion over the Light-elves in the beginning of time, i. e. of the year (í árdögum). Skirnir (from skírr, *pure, clear*) is *the clarifier, that which brings the pure, clear air*. Gerd (Gerðr) is from gera, *to do, make*, as in akrgerð, *agriculture*. As she dwells in the mansion of Gymir, the allusion may possibly be to the word garð, *enclosure, court, garth*. When represented as Frigg's rival,

[1] Pages 32, *sqq*.

the allusion is perhaps to the earth prepared by the plough; but when, in Skirnir's journey, she is described as a beautiful girl, with bright, shining arms, the image is without doubt borrowed from the seed, the bright, yellow corn, so beneficial to man. She is of giant race, of earth, and as yet dead, but, nevertheless, fair and fertile. Her resemblance to Ceres is evident: *Geres*, quod *gerit* fruges[1]; O. Nor. gera, gerði; Lat. gero, gessi. Barri, or Barey, is *the wood or isle of germs or buds*, from bar, *bud, the eye in a tree, the winged seed.* When the god of fruitfulness embraces the seed, it shoots forth; and that takes place with the aid of Skirnir. Gerd's father, Gymir (Geymir), denotes *one who keeps, lays by.* Her mother's name, Aurboda, alludes to the material, earthly substance that is not yet developed. Frey parted with his sword. This seems to indicate that he lost his fertilizing power: he gave it to Skirnir, but whether the latter retained it, or what became of it, does not appear from the myth. He does not require it in his combat with Beli[2]. The myth respecting Beli is not complete, and, therefore, obscure. It may, however, be noticed that the interpreters take him for Gerd's brother, of whom she says, that she is fearful Skirnir will be her brother's destroyer[3]. We may here also observe, that in the Lokaglepsa[4] two attendants are attributed to Frey, Beyggvir and his wife Beyla. Of Beyggvir Loki says, that he is a little, pert being that is always hanging at the ear of Frey, and makes a rattling under or by the hand-mill; that he can never distribute meat to men, and that he hid himself in the bed-straw when men contended. Of Beyla he says, that she is full of evil, and that an uglier monster never came among the Æsir, nor a dirtier slut. Professor Petersen considers it evident that by Beyggvir the refuse of the mill, as chaff,

[1] Varro de L. L. v. 64.
[2] Pages, 49, 79, 81.
[3] Skirnis-för, Str. 16 and page 47.
[4] Str. 44-46, 53, 56.

etc. is signified, and that Beyla is the manure which softens and develops the seed that is put in the earth. Professor F. Magnusen supposes Beyggvir and his wife to be two little parhelia attendant upon Frey, the solar divinity. Frey's ship, Skidbladnir[1], belonged according to some to Odin, or, in general, to all the gods[2]. Frey obtained it in days of old (í ardögum), *i. e.* in the early part of the year, when navigation commences. His hog, Gullinbursti, *gold-bristled*, is probably an emblem of the earth's fertility. With the ship of Frey is no doubt connected the custom, formerly prevailing in some parts of Germany, of carrying about a ship and a plough, in the beginning of spring[3]; both the one and the other with reference to Frey, as the god of agriculture and prosperity. Freyia is the chief of the Valkyriur, and like them a chooser of the slain[4].

Oegir and Rân.—As Niörd is the mild sea of the coast, so is Oegir the wild, raging, more distant ocean, which is, nevertheless, in contact with the agency of the Æsir; hence the double nature of Oegir; he is a giant, and yet has friendly intercourse with the Æsir. In Mimir, Oegir and Niörd we thus have the entire ocean from its origin to its last development, where like a benevolent divinity it attaches itself to the Æsir, that is, to men. Oegir and Hler are usually considered as one and the same deity[5]. Oegir visits the Æsir in Asgard, where Bragi relates to him those narratives in Snorri's Edda, which are called Bragaræður, or discourses of Bragi[6]. The Æsir returned his visit, on which occasion they remark that his

[1] Page 39. Grimnism. Str. 43.
[2] Ynglingas. c. 7.
[3] Grimm, D. M. p. 242.
[4] Page 32.
[5] "Forniot had three sons; one was named Hlêr, whom we call Ægir, the second Logi, the third Kari." Fornald. Sog. ii. 17, Snorra-Edda, p. 79. See also p. 27, and *note* [4].
[6] Snorra-Edda, p. 79.

brewing kettle is not large enough, and Thor accompanied by Týr fetches, as we have seen, a more capacious one from the giant Hymir[1]. After Baldur's death the Æsir visit him a second time, when Loki comes and vents all his spleen on them. Here we learn that he has two serving-men, Fimafeng (Funafeng) and Eldir; that bright gold was used in his hall instead of fire, and that Oegir himself handed the beer round[2]. Oegir's, or Rân's, or their daughters' fire is a skaldic periphrasis for gold[3].

Illustration.—The whole myth is simple and intelligible. Oegir is the stormy ocean, from óga, *to dread, shudder at*. His wife's name, Rân, signifies *plunder, robbery*. It is a common expression in the North that the ocean brews and boils, which serves to illustrate Oegir's kettles; the frothy drink also bears itself round, and there is plenty of it. Equally common is the idea of the ocean's surge, which in its most violent motion becomes phosphorescent. Seafaring men have much to relate of the shining of the sea, which is ascribed to insects. Oegir's servants are, therefore, good stokers. Eldir is from elda, *to make a fire*, and Fimafeng is *the rapid, agile*. (Funafengr is probably from funi, *fire*). His daughters' names, as we have already remarked, denote waves[4]. With Oegir is associated an idea of the terrific; hence the Oegishiálmr belonging to Fafnir, at which all living beings were terrified[5].

The attributes of Heimdall, as far as they are not descriptive of the vigilant guardian, are derived from the rainbow. He is a Van, because the rainbow appears in the sky. He is, at the same time, Odin's son, as being superhuman. His mothers, the nine giantesses, are the aqueous, earthy, and, on account of their brightness, the metallic parts of which the rainbow was thought to con-

[1] Hymiskv. Str. 1, *sqq.* and page 67.
[2] Lokaglepsa, Introd.
[3] Skáldskap. 33.
[4] Page 27.
[5] Page 97, *note* [2].

sist. Here there is no allusion to the number of the colours of the rainbow, which are given as three, but to their appearance. He is called Golden-tooth, because of the beauty of the rainbow, and Descending (Hallinskeiði), because of its curved figure[1].

Illustration.—Heimþallr is derived from heimr, *the world*, and þallr or dallr, *a tree which sends forth shoots and branches*. This word is the same with þollr, *a long pole*; the name Heimþallr will therefore signify the pole or post of the world. The rainbow also, when incomplete, is still by the Northern nations called a Veirstolpe (Veirstötte), literally *a weather-post*; and the Slavonic word for the rainbow, duga, signifies strictly *the stave of a cask*[2]. The ancients must therefore have had in view the rainbow's rarely perfect figure; but when it appeared in its full beauty, like a broad bridge, it is easy to conceive why they called it Bifröst, or *the trembling, swinging way*, leading from earth to heaven[3]. Its curved figure gave occasion also for regarding it as a horn, one end of which was at Giöll (the horizon), the other at Himinbiörg (the heavenly mountains, i. e. the clouds), whence Heimdall raised his Giallar-horn, as it is said,

> Early up Bifröst
> ran Ulfrun's son,
> the mighty horn-blower
> of Himinbiörg[4].

By nine, the number of Heimdall's mothers, nothing more seems implied than its well-known sanctity among almost all the people of antiquity. The number of Oegir's daughters is also nine[5]. Heimdall descended among man-

[1] Page 29. [2] Grimm, D. M. p. 695.

[3] It was believed that at the place where the rainbow rises, a golden dish or a treasure was hidden, and that gold money falls from the rainbow.

[4] Hrafnag. Oþins, Str. 26. [5] Page 27.

kind under the name of Rig[1], whence the whole human race are called children of Heimdall[2]. In the contest between Heimdall and Loki for the Brisinga-men[3], the idea seems to lie that fire and the rainbow vie with each other in displaying the most beautiful colours.

From the foregoing attempt to illustrate the mythology of the Scandinavian nations, it appears that their gods were neither more nor less than figurative representations of the agency of nature and mankind. Nothing is there without signification, yet there is nothing that lies without the pale of our forefathers' experience, or that is incompatible with the manner in which Antiquity was wont to conceive it. Heaven and earth are the two great leading ideas which comprise the others; between both are sea and air. Thunder and the rainbow are the two most prominent natural phenomena, which first and most impressively must excite the attention of mankind. The Northman was encompassed with bare ice-mountains, nearer to him were high hills and boundless forests; but immediately around his dwelling was the fertile field. Plenty and contentment at home, and the bloody game of war abroad, were his

[1] Rigsmál. This forms the subject of the Eddaic poem Rigsmál. Heimdall, one of the Æsir, wanders in green ways along the sea-strand. He calls himself Rig (Rígr); he is strong, active and honourable. In a hut he finds a great-grandfather and a great-grandmother (ái and edda), with whom he stays three nights. Nine months after, the old woman gives birth to the swarthy thrall, from whom the race of thralls descends. Rig wanders further and finds in a house a grandfather and a grandmother (afi and amma). Nine months after, the grandmother gives birth to a boy, the progenitor of the peasant race. Rig proceeds still further, and finds in a hall a father and mother, and nine months after, the mother brings forth Jarl (earl). Jarl marries Erna, a daughter of Hersir (baron), and the youngest of their sons is the young Konr (Konr úngr, *contr.* konúngr, *king*). The last-mentioned are objects of Rig's especial care; he is solicitous not only with regard to their birth, but for their instruction and culture, thus affording a striking example of the aristocratic spirit that prevailed in the North from the remotest period.

[2] Völuspá, Str. 1. [3] Page 29.

earthly desires. What wonder then, if he imagined all around him to be animated by divine beings, which he represented with all the sagacity he possessed? But this conception of physical images was not without application to his intellectual and moral nature. This connection was so close, that it is inseparable even in language, and everywhere we meet with proofs that Antiquity also raised itself to this higher conception. Odin is not only lord over the whole physical world, but is king also of the intellectual. Heimdall is not only the rainbow, but is, at the same time, the benignant announcer of the divine care. Thor is not only the thunder, but also courage and strength. Vidar is not only lord of the boundless forests, but is incorruptibility itself. Baldur is not alone the god of summer, but is also all goodness and piety. Tŷ is not only war, but is also honour and glory. Frey and Freyia are not alone givers of fruitfulness, but, at the same time, the germinating, blooming and beatifying, the boundless love in the breast of man. Nor is Loki the god of fire alone, but is also the origin of all evil and the father of lies. Hence proceeds the multitude of names and epithets (always significant, though we may not always be able to explain them) that are applied to the gods; they express their natures from different points of view, and describe their characters. Loki, for instance, is *active, shrewd of speech, cunning, inventive, sagacious, false, wicked*; Baldur is *white* (*bright*), *good*; Heimdall *holy, white*; Thor is *large, strong, not remarkably clever,* but *good-natured with all his strength,* etc. etc. In describing Odin, *the old, venerable, long-bearded, one-eyed being,* in all his might, wisdom, goodness, austerity and ferocity; in all his manifestations in heaven and on earth, the Old Norse language employed all its riches, a far greater store than can now be furnished from the combined stores of its descendants.

The Destruction and Renewal of the World.—

A people that raised their thoughts to beings higher than heaven and earth, must naturally, at the same time, believe in the cessation of that heaven and earth. Before the gods existed there were higher powers, from whose breath all creation drew life. These could annihilate their own work, though its nobler part might not pass away, which is as imperishable as themselves. To these ideas leads also the consideration of nature herself. The circumvolution on a small scale is repeated on a larger; the darkness of night and the light of day are a reduced repetition of the interchange of winter and summer, and both amplified are prefigurations of the destruction and renewal of all nature. This time or age is brought forth like every other, and must, therefore, like every other, pass away; but as the year is renewed, in like manner shall time also be renewed. In the myth of Baldur's death with its conclusion, the birth of Vali, the idea of Ragnaröck is so evident, that the one cannot well be conceived without drawing with it the presence of the other. The death of summer is a presage of the downfall of the gods, which begins with the great, severe winter (fimbul-vetr). All nature is described as agitated by the storms of autumn, snow drifts, frost prevails, fire struggles in its bonds, and the earth is filled with conflict. The powers of darkness unite with the super-celestial spirits, and fire and water desolate the world. The sun and moon were also created, and they shall be swallowed by the pursuing wolves. But a new earth shoots forth, a new human race appears, a new sun beams in the heaven. Of the moon there is no more mention, for there will be no more night. The noblest of the gods return to their pristine innocence and joy. The nature that had until then prevailed is perished with Odin, but Vidar and Vali live, imperishable nature survives and blooms like the ever-youthful year. Baldur and Höd live peaceably together, there is no longer strife

between summer and winter, light and darkness. Thor no more thunders, but his strength and courage pervade nature as Modi and Magni. Freyia with her sensual pleasure is no more, but Hœnir, the unperishing sensitive faculty, continues to operate in the new human race. Earth's former creatures live now in heaven. As individual heroes could be renewed and regenerated here on earth, so were chosen bands of warriors assembled in Valhall, for the purpose of continuing, while the earthly age lasted, the best of earthly occupations; but even in life there was something higher than warfare—peace; battle itself shall, therefore, cease with the great battle of nature, and all the gods be assembled in Gimli, the abode of peace and innocence. Over this a new heaven will be spread, where the benignant and protecting elves will watch over mankind as of old in earthly life. Even dwarfs and giants shall all live in peace. The Mighty One shall come from above and sit in judgement; there shall be an eternal separation between good and evil, which had previously been confounded. An everlasting reward shall await the good, everlasting torment the evil. Beyond this no eye may see.

Illustration.—Ragnaröck, *the darkness* or *twilight of the gods* (from regin, *gen. pl.* ragna, *deus, potestas*, and röckr, *twilight, darkness*). That wolves pursued and would swallow up the sun and moon, is a general figure to express the eclipse of the heavenly bodies. The solar wolf has also been explained to be a parhelion[1]. Egdir, the eagle, and Fialar, and the other two cocks[2], do not strictly belong to Ragnaröck, but to the previous state of the world. What they signify is extremely obscure, or, rather, unknown. Who the two brothers are, whose sons shall inhabit Vindheim[3], is quite uncertain: some suppose them to be Thor and Baldur. Gimli is the clear, bright heaven;

[1] Lex. Mythol. p. 414, *note*. [2] Page 78. [3] Page 83.

Vidblain and Andlang, the spacious blue heaven, the boundless æther; Okólnir, the warm (lit. *the uncold*). Cold had hitherto been the lot of the giants, but now they also shall share in the warmth; to this also the name Brímir alludes, from bríni, fire. Náströnd is from ná, *a corpse*, therefore *the strand of corpses*. Slid (Sliðr) signifies *the sluggish* or *pernicious*; Nidhögg, the serpent of darkness, or envy. The idea of all nature awaiting a deliverance from the existing state of things, and a renewal or exaltation of its blunted powers, is deeply impressed on the human mind; it is also Oriental, but manifests itself among several nations under various forms, though essentially the same.

APPENDIX.

THE GROTTASAVNGR, OR MILL-SONG.

As belonging to the province of Northern mythology, it has been deemed desirable to add an account of the celebrated Gróttasavngr, or Mill-song[1], which is to be found in every MS. of Sæmund's Edda, except the parchment one in the Royal Library at Copenhagen.

King Frodi (Fróþi) paid a visit to King Fiölnir in Sweden, and there bought two female slaves, called Fenia and Menia, who were both large and strong. At that time there were found in Denmark two millstones so large that no one was able to drag them. These millstones had the property that they produced whatever the grinder wished for. The mill was called Grótti. Hengikiaptr (hanging jaw) was the name of him who gave the mill to Frodi. King Frodi caused the slaves to be led to the millstones, and ordered them to grind gold, and peace, and prosperity to Frodi, giving them no longer rest or sleep than while the cuckoo was silent or a song might be sung. It is said that they then sung the song called Gróttasavngr, and before they left off, that they ground an army against Frodi; so that in the same night there came a sea-king called Mysing, who slew Frodi, and took great spoil. Mysing took with him the mill Grótti, together with Fenia and Menia, and ordered them to grind salt. At midnight they asked Mysing whether he had salt enough? He bade them go on grinding. They had ground but a little

[1] Skáldskap. p. 146.

more when the ship sank. There was afterwards a whirlpool in the ocean, where the water falls into the eye of the millstone, and thence the sea became salt.

Professor Petersen[1] considers the myth to signify the cultivation of the land during peace, and the prosperity consequent thereupon, that prosperity begets desire, and desire war. The grinding of salt is a later adoption, as in the latter part of the song it is said that one of the stones had been split asunder in grinding for Frodi.

THE THREE SOLEMN PAGAN FESTIVALS[2].

Three great festivals were celebrated every year in the time of heathenism, when sacrifices were made to the gods. The first was held at the new year, which was reckoned from the 'mother-night,' so called because the new year sprang, as it were, out of her lap. The month, which began then with the first new moon, was called Yule-month (Jule-tungel), and, from the sacrifice, Thora-blot[3], which was then chiefly celebrated. This season, even to the present day, is called Thorsmånad. Kings and jarls, not only in Sweden, but also in Denmark and Norway, held at this time their great sacrificial meetings or guilds. Rich land-holders then made ready their Yule-beer for friends and kindred; but the poorer, who had no wealthy relatives, assembled in feastings, to which they all contributed, and drank hop-öl (social beer). On these occasions offerings were made to the gods for a prosperous year, both to Odin for success in war, and to Frey for a good harvest. Animals of various kinds were slaughtered, but the principal victim was a hog, which was especially

[1] Nordisk Mythologie, p. 221. [2] Afzelius, i. 15.

[3] So called, it is supposed, from Thorri, an ancient king or deity of the Fins and Lapps, of the race of Forniot, and blót, *sacrifice*. See Snorra-Edda, ed. Rask, p. 358.

sacred to Frey, because the swine is supposed to have first taught mankind to plough the earth. This was led forth well fattened and adorned; and it was a custom to make vows over the sacred hog, and pledge themselves to some great enterprise, to be achieved before the next Yule-meeting (Jula-môt). Feastings, bodily exercises, and Yule-games occupied the whole of this month, whence it was denominated skämte-mänad (the merry month).

Midwinter sacrifice was the second grand festival, and took place on the first new moon after Yule-month, to the honour of Göa or Goa. This goddess was believed to preside over the fertility of the earth, and to be a daughter of Thor. Hence in many places, when thunder is heard, the people still say, *Goa is passing*. After her the month of February is called Göje-mänad. At a later period this sacrifice acquired the appellation of Disa-blot, when the celebrated Queen Disa, whose memory is still preserved in the traditions of the Swedish people, had not only partaken in, but almost superseded, the worship of Frigg and Goa at this festival. The story of Queen Disa is usually related as follows:—

When King Frey, or, according to other accounts, a King Sigtrud, far back in the times of heathenism, ruled in the North, the population, during a long peace, had so greatly increased, that one year, on the coming of winter, the crops of the preceding autumn were already consumed. The king therefore summoned all the commonalty to an assembly, for the purpose of finding a remedy for the impending evil, when it was decreed, that all the old, the sickly, the deformed, and the idle should be slain and offered to Odin. When one of the king's councillors, named Siustin, returned from the assembly to his dwelling in Uppland, his daughter, Disa, inquired of him what had there taken place; and as she was in all respects wise and judicious, he recounted to her what had been resolved on.

On hearing it she said she could have given better counsel, and wondered that among so many men there was found so little wisdom. These words reached at length the ears of the king, who was angry at her boldness and conceit, and declared he would soon put her to her wit's end. He promised to take her to his counsel, but on condition that she should come to him not on foot nor on horseback, not driving nor sailing, not clad nor unclad, not in a year nor a month, not by day nor by night, not in the moon's increase nor wane. Disa, in her perplexity at this order, prayed to the goddess Frigg for counsel, and then went to the king in the following manner. She harnessed two young men to a sledge, by the side of which she caused a goat to be led; she held one leg in the sledge and placed the other on the goat, and was herself clad in a net. Thus she came to the king neither walking nor riding, nor driving, nor sailing, neither clad nor unclad. She came neither in a current year nor month, but on the third day before Yule, one of the days of the solstice, which were not reckoned as belonging to the year itself, but as a complement, and in like manner might be said not to belong to any month. She came neither in the increase nor in the wane, but just at the full moon; neither by day nor by night, but in the twilight. The king wondered at such sagacity, ordered her to be brought before him, and found so great delight in her conversation, beauty and understanding, that he made her his queen. Following her advice, he then divided the people into two portions, one of which, according to lot, he furnished with arms, hunting gear, and as much seed-corn as would suffice for one sowing, and sent them to the uninhabited regions of the north, there to establish a colony and cultivate the land. Much other good counsel this queen gave for the benefit of the country, for which she was loved and honoured both by king and people; and so highly was she prized for her

wisdom, that many difficult disputes were referred to her judgement at the midwinter sacrifice, which soon acquired the name of Disa-blot, and Disa-ting, of which the great winter fair at Upsala is a memorial.

The above saga has been variously interpreted. According to some, Disa will represent to the king the importance and necessity of agriculture; she herself, neither clad nor unclad, represents the earth in early spring, when grass here and there is beginning to shoot forth, but does not yet deck the fields with green; the trees begin with their swelling buds to show signs of foliage, but still lack their beauteous, leafy summer clothing. Then it is not good to travel, neither in a carriage nor a sledge; then is it best for the husbandman to watch the season, to be observant of the changes and influences of the sun and moon, of the weather, of old signs and tokens, a knowledge of which is a useful heritage from his forefathers' experience.

The third great yearly festival was held at the beginning of spring, for prosperity and victory by land and sea, though more especially for the naval expeditions or 'vikingafärder,' in which almost every free-born, warlike man now prepared to participate. At this festival Odin was chiefly invoked.

THE QUICKEN-TREE, OR MOUNTAIN-ASH[1].

According to a superstition derived from the time of heathenism, the quicken-tree or mountain-ash[2] possesses great occult virtues. A staff of it is believed to be a preservative against sorcery. In ancient times the people made a part of their ships of it, supposing it to be good against the storms raised by Rân. The superstition originated in the aid it afforded to Thor[3].

[1] Afzelius, i. 21.

[2] The Sorbus aucuparia, the Rowan of the Scottish Highlanders.

[3] Mythol. p. 53.

OF PLACES OF WORSHIP[1].

Spacious and magnificent temples, in honour of the gods, were erected in many parts of the Scandinavian countries, besides which there were stone-groups or altars for sacrificial purposes. Such a pagan altar was called a *horg*, whence the priestesses attending it were denominated *horgabrudar*. By every horg or temple there was a sacred grove, or a solitary tree, on which the offerings were suspended. Such trees were supposed to possess great virtue in the cure of diseases. Hence it is that even now some trees are regarded with a superstitious veneration, particularly the lime, and those in which 'elf-holes,' or openings formed by two branches that have grown together, are found. These are often cut down for superstitious purposes. Women, who have difficult labours, are drawn through them, and have thereby not unfrequently lost their lives; and superstitious persons may be often seen carrying sickly children to a forest, for the purpose of dragging them through such holes.

By every sacred grove there was a well or fountain, in which the offerings were washed.

OF SOOTHSAYING AND SORCERY[2].

Besides the regular priests, the Northern nations had also their wise men and women, or soothsayers. The principal kinds of witchcraft were seid (seiðr) and galder (galdr); though there seems also to have been a third species, as the prophetesses (völur), prophets (vitkar), and seid-workers (seið-berendr) are distinguished from each other, and spring from different origins[3]. Galder is a derivation of at gala, *to sing*[4], and consisted in producing

[1] Afzelius, i. 18, 20.

[2] From Petersen, Danmarks Historie and Keyser, Relig. Forfatn.

[3] Hyndlulj. Str. 32.

[4] Like our *enchant*.

supernatural effects by means of certain songs, or by cutting certain runes. This in itself may not have been criminal, as there was also a species called meingaldr (from mein, *harm*, etc.), by which something evil was brought forth. Groa sang over the stone that was lodged in Thor's forehead[1], Oddrun over Borgny when the latter could not bring forth[2]. A particular kind of galder was valgalder, by which the dead were waked and made to converse, that the will of fate might be known from their mouth. This is ascribed to Odin, who sat under one hanged and compelled him to speak, or went down to the nether world, waked the dead Vala, and made her prophesy[3]. We also find that Hardgrepe cut songs on wood, and caused them to be laid under a corpse's tongue, which compelled it to rise and sing[4]. Hild by her song waked Högni and Hedin's fallen warriors, that they might continually renew the combat[5]. As examples of such songs may be mentioned that by which Hervör woke Angantyr, and the so-called Busla's prayer and Serpa's verse[6].

Seid, according to some, consisted in a kind of boiling (from at sioða, *to boil*); although in the original authorities there is nothing that evidently alludes to that process[7]. The Æsir learned it from Freyia[8]; it was regarded as unseemly for men, and was usually practised by women only: we nevertheless meet with seid-men. Both seid and galder were practised by Odin himself. The seid-woman occupied an elevated seat with four pillars. All changes in nature, such as quenching fire, stilling the sea, turning the wind, waking the dead, seem to have been mostly effected by galder; while by means of seid the fate

[1] Mythol. p. 71.
[2] Oddr. Grátr, Str. 6.
[3] Ynglingas. c. 7, and Mythol. pp. 16, 72.
[4] Saxo, p. 38, edit. Müller.
[5] Ib. p. 242.
[6] Saga Herrauðs ok Bosa, cap. 5.
[7] See Grimm, D. M. p. 988.
[8] Ynglingas. c. 4.

of individuals was ascertained and control over futurity acquired; by seid death, misfortune and disease could be caused to others, intellect and strength taken from one and given to another, storms raised, etc. etc. On account of its wickedness, it was held unworthy of a man to practise seid, and the seid-man was prosecuted and burned as an atrocious trollman. The seid-women received money to make men hard, so that iron could not wound them[1].

The most remarkable class of seid-women were the so-called Valas, or Völvas. We find them present at the birth of children, when they seem to represent the Norns. They acquired their knowledge either by means of seid, during the night, while all others in the house were sleeping, and uttered their oracles in the morning; or they received sudden inspirations during the singing of certain songs appropriated to the purpose, without which the sorcery could not perfectly succeed. These seid-women are common over all the North. They were invited by the master of a family, and appeared in a peculiar costume, sometimes with a considerable number of followers, e. g. with fifteen young men and fifteen girls. For their soothsaying they received money, gold rings and other precious things. Sometimes it was necessary to compel them to prophesy. An old description of such a Vala, who went from guild to guild telling fortunes, will give the best idea of these women and their proceedings:—

Thorbiörg during the winter attended the guilds, at the invitation of those who desired to know their fate or the quality of the coming year. Everything was prepared in the most sumptuous manner for her reception. There was an elevated seat, on which lay a cushion stuffed with feathers. A man was sent to meet her. She came in the evening, dressed in a blue mantle fastened with thongs,

[1] Ynglingas. c. 4, 7, 17. Hrólfss. Kraka, c. 3, 48, 51. Fríþðjófss. c. 5. Örvaroddss. c. 19. Gaungu-Hrólfss. c. 28. Sögubrot af Fornkon. c. 4.

and set with stones down to the lap; round her neck she had a necklace of glass beads, on her head a hood of black lambskin lined with white catskin; in her hand a staff, the head of which was mounted with brass and ornamented with stones; round her body she wore a girdle of dry wood (knöske), from which hung a bag containing her conjuring apparatus; on her feet were rough calfskin shoes with long ties and tin buttons; on her hands catskin gloves, white and hairy within. All bade her welcome with a reverent salutation; the master himself conducted her by the hand to her seat. She undertook no prophecy on the first day, but would first pass a night there. In the evening of the following day she ascended her elevated seat, caused the women to place themselves round her, and desired them to sing certain songs, which they did in a strong, clear voice. She then prophesied of the coming year, and afterwards all that would advanced and asked her such questions as they thought proper, to which they received plain answers[1].

Besides galder and seid, there were no doubt other kinds of sorcery. It was believed, for instance, that the Fins in particular possessed the art of raising storms and of deceiving the sight of their enemies, so that the stones they cast in their way appeared to them as lofty mountains, and a snowball as a great river. These arts may therefore be regarded as more ancient than the Æsir-lore. The Danish sea-commander, Odde, could without a ship traverse the ocean, by magic spells raise a storm against his enemies, and so deceive their eyesight, that the swords of the Danes appeared to them as emitting rays and glittering as if on fire. Gudrun so beguiled the vision of Jarmerik's warriors that they turned their weapons against each other. Others, like Gunholm and Hildiger, could by magic songs blunt the edge of swords. The trollman

[1] Ut supra; Nornagestss. 11; Örvaro-Sss. 2; Saga Thorfinns Karlsefnis.

and the witch could, like Harthgrebe, assume various forms, make themselves little or big, ugly or handsome; also invest themselves with the likeness of a whale or other animal, as the trollman sent by Harald Blâtand to Iceland, and the troll-wife who, in order to kill King Frodi, transformed herself to a sea-cow, and her sons to calves. With viands prepared from snakes or serpents a person procured strength, wisdom and success in war for any favourite individual. By oblivious potions and philters lovers were made to forget their old love and contract a new one. That which Grimhild gave to Gudrun consisted of a strong drink, ice-cold water and blood: and with this drink were mingled many potent (evil) things, as the juice of all kinds of trees, acorns, soot, entrails of victims, and boiled swine's liver, which has the virtue of extinguishing hatred. In the horn containing it runes were sculptured[1].

Trollmen, it was believed, could derive much aid from certain animals: thus the art of interpreting the voice of birds is spoken of as a source of great discoveries. The crow was in this respect a bird of considerable importance, and that such was also the case with the raven is evident from Odin's Hugin and Munin. The cat is also mentioned as a special favourite among trollmen. The skilful Icelandic magician, Thorolf Skegge, is said to have had no less than twenty large black cats, that valiantly defended their master when attacked, and gave eighteen men enough to do[2].

Of the 'hamhlaup,' or power of assuming various forms, we have an example in Odin himself, who could change his appearance (hamr), and as a bird, a fish or

[1] Saxo, p. 249, 192, 414, 179, 37, 256; Snorri, Saga Olafs Tryggv. c. 37. Goðrúnar Harmr, 21–23.

[2] Ragn. Loðbr. Saga. 8; Völs. S. 19; Snorri, Olaf Kyr. Saga, 9; Vatnsd. Saga, 28.

other animal transport himself to distant lands [1]; also in the falcon-plumage (valshamr, fiaþrhamr) of the goddesses, which they could lend to others, and in the swan-plumage of the Valkyriur [2]. It was likewise believed that men could by magic be changed to the form of wolves, which they could lay aside only at certain times. Of some it was believed that by putting on a magical hat or hood (dularkuſl, huliðshjálmr), they could render themselves invisible to, or not to be recognised by, others [3]; or by certain arts alter the whole aspect of the surrounding country. Of all this many instances occur in the Sagas. The witch Liot would change the aspect of the country in the sight of others, by placing one foot over her head, walking backwards, and protruding her head between her legs; but the process failed, as they saw her before she saw them. Svan, when desirous of concealing another, wrapped a goatskin round his head, and said: "There will be fog, and bugbears, and great wonders for all who seek after thee [4]." A man became 'freskr,' i. e. capable of seeing the concealed trollman by looking under another's arm placed a-kimbo on the left side [5]. Even to the glance or look of the eye an extraordinary effect was ascribed, sometimes harmless, as Svanhild's when the horses were about to trample on her, or as Sigurd's, whose sharp glance held the most savage dogs at bay [6]; sometimes pernicious. The effect of either might be neutralized by drawing a bag over the head, by which process the trollman lost his power. It is told of one, that he saw through

[1] Ynglingas. c. 7. [2] Mythol. pp. 54, 85.

[3] This was effected by a kind of powder resembling ashes, which the operator sprinkled over and around the person it was intended to conceal. Snorri, Har. Hárf. Saga, 31; Olaf Helg. Saga, 143.

[4] Vatnsdælas, c. 26; Njála, c. 27, etc.

[5] Örvarodds, c. 29. Mythol. p. 166.

[6] Völsúngas. c. 29; Olafss. Tryggvas. c. 208. Mythol. p. 18.

a hole in the bag, and with a glance destroyed a whole field of grass [1]. Hence the common saying of one having *an evil eye*. Troll-wives and noxious demons (uvættir) are described, as Hyrrockin, riding on wolves with snakes or serpents for a rein [2]. Such ridings generally took place by night, and the heroes pursued and slew these beings of the dark [3]. In an old narrative of such a ride the circumstance appears that the troll rode on a staff [4]; but of assemblies of witches on mountains, as on the Blåkulla in Sweden, Troms in Norway, Hekla in Iceland, the Blocksberg in the north of Germany, of which we read so much in the legends of the middle age, we find absolutely nothing: this superstition must have arisen at or after the introduction of Christianity.

A peculiar kind of magic was that called 'sitting out' (útiseta, at sitja úti), which consisted in sitting out at night, and by certain magical proceedings, which are no longer known, though oftenest with 'galder,' summoning forth trolls, or raising the dead, for the purpose of interrogating them [5].

In the more fabulous Sagas mention occurs of a variety of superstitions, such as of a wooden image endowed with life, by means of 'galder,' and sent to Iceland, by which Thorleif Jarlaskiáld was slain; the raising of charmed weather, by shaking a weather-bag (veðrbelgr), from which storms proceeded; the belief that certain men every ninth night became women; that a man, by a kind of grass placed under a woman's head, might excite her love; that persons could by magic be fixed to the spot where they stood, without the power of stirring from it; that there are mantles, woven by elves, whereby women's fidelity and maidens' chastity may be tested, etc. etc. Some of these

[1] Laxdælas. c. 37, 38.
[2] Mythol. p. 75.
[3] Helgakv. Hadíngask. Str. 146.
[4] Saga Thorsteins Bæarm. c. 2.
[5] Ynglingas. 7, Hák. Herðabr. S. 18.

superstitions may have prevailed in the North, though many of them are no doubt mere later fictions.

Garments also could be charmed, either for the protection of the wearer, or to cause injury or death. Of the chieftain Thorir Hund it is said, that he caused several frocks of reindeer skin to be made by the Fins, that were so charmed that no weapon could cut or pierce them; and in the battle of Stiklastad one of these frocks protected him against the sword of St. Olaf, when that king struck him across the shoulders. Harald Hákonson, jarl of the Orkneys, died, we are told, in consequence of a charmed garment, that had been wrought by his own mother and her sister, but intended for his half-brother, Pál Jarl. Swords were sometimes so enchanted, that success in battle attended those that bore them, and the wounds made by them could be healed only by being spread over with 'life-stone' (lífsteinn). That such swords might have their full effect, much was to be attended to: the famous sword Sköfnung, for instance, that was taken from Hrolf Kraki's sepulchral mound, might not be drawn in the presence of women, or so that the sun shone on the hilt, otherwise it lost somewhat of its virtue[1].

The most efficient and solemn mode of wishing evil to another was that called 'níð' (enmity), which consisted in setting up a nith-stake (at reisa níð). The process is thus described by Saxo, who relates how such a níð-stake was raised against Eric the Eloquent:—The head of a horse, that had been sacrificed to the gods, was set on a stake, the jaws being held distended by wooden pins. And this is confirmed by the Sagas. When Egil Skallagrimsson would 'níða' King Eric Blodöxe and Queen Gunnhild in Norway, he took a hazel-stake, ascended a mountain-peak that

[1] Snorri, Ol. Hel. Saga, 204, 240; Orkney. S. p. 144. Laxd. S. 57, 58; Korm. S. 9. Keyser, p. 141.

looked towards the interior of the country, and set a horse's head on the stake, while he uttered the following malediction: "Here raise I a nith-stake, and turn this 'nith' against King Eric and Queen Gunnhild—at the same time turning the head towards the country. And I turn this 'nith' against the 'land-vættir' that abide in this land, so that they may wander about, without finding house or habitation, until they shall have driven King Eric and Queen Gunnhild from the country[1]." He then drove the stake fast down in a cleft of the mountain, and cut runes on it containing the same malediction[1]. In perfect accordance with this is the law of Ulfliot[2], that no one might sail towards the land with a yawning head at the stem, in order not to terrify the land-vættir, or guardian deities. In other narratives we find that a human head of wood was set in the breast of the slaughtered horse. Another species of nith was performed with runes, which in some way or other must be conveyed to the enemy or his property: for this purpose the operator cut runes on wood, smeared them with his blood, uttered 'galder' over them, and walked round them against the sun, then cast them into the sea, with the wish that they might be drifted to the object against whom the nith was directed[3].

But as misfortune and lasting calamity could be caused to others by imprecations, so could one individual, by good wishes, impart to others good fortune and happiness; and the belief was general, that the father's luck could continue to operate on the life of the son, and of generous, kind relatives on that of succeeding generations, and that the

[1] Gunnhild had at a banquet caused a poisoned drink to be presented to Egil, who having cause for suspicion, scratched runes on the horn with his knife, wounded himself in the palm, and smeared the runes with blood, when the horn burst asunder and the liquor was spilt. Hence his enmity.

[2] The first lawgiver of Iceland. He lived in the 10th century.

[3] Saxo, p. 203; Egilss. c. 60; Vatnsdælas. c. 31, 36, etc.

king or a chieftain could communicate his good fortune to others. Thus it is related of Odin, that to render his men successful in battle, he laid his hands on them and blessed them; of Olaf Tryggvason, that to Halfred and others he gave his good luck; of Höskuld Dalakolssen in Iceland, that just before his death he gave his son a ring together with his own and his kindred's good fortune; and Svend Tveskiæg, who formed a commercial connection with Vanhelds-Roe, communicated to him a share of his prosperity.

EPITOME OF GERMAN[1] MYTHOLOGY.

To the Germans no Edda has been transmitted, nor has any writer of former times sought to collect the remains of German heathenism. On the contrary, the early writers of Germany having, in the Roman school, been alienated from all reminiscences of their paternal country, have striven, not to preserve, but to extirpate every trace of their ancient faith[2]. Much, therefore, of the old German mythology being thus irretrievably lost, I turn to the sources which remain, and which consist partly in written documents, partly in the never-stationary stream of living traditions and customs. The first, although they may reach far back, yet appear fragmentary and lacerated, while the existing popular tradition hangs on threads which finally connect it with Antiquity[3].

The principal sources of German mythology are, therefore, I. Popular narratives; II. Superstitions and ancient customs, in which traces of heathen myths, religious ideas and forms of worship are to be found.

[1] It is to be observed that the word *German* is here used in its modern signification, to the exclusion of the Scandinavian nations; when meaning to include the whole race, I have generally adopted the term *Germanic*.

[2] Grimm, D. M. Vorrede, p. VIII.

[3] Ib. p. X.

Popular narratives branch into three classes: I. Heroic Traditions (Heldensagen); II. Popular Traditions (Volkssagen); III. Popular Tales (Märchen). That they all in common—though traceable only in Christian times—have preserved much of heathenism, is confirmed by the circumstance, that in them many beings make their appearance who incontestably belong to heathenism, viz. those subordinate beings the dwarfs, water-sprites, etc., who are wanting in no religion which, like the German, has developed conceptions of personal divinities[1].

The principal sources of German Heroic Tradition are a series of poems, which have been transmitted from the eighth, tenth, but chiefly from the twelfth down to the fifteenth century. These poems are founded, as has been satisfactorily proved, on popular songs, collected, arranged and formed into one whole, for the most part by professed singers. The heroes, who constitute the chief personages in the narrative, were probably once gods or heroes, whose deep-rooted myths have been transmitted through Christian times in an altered and obscured form. With the great German heroic tradition—the story of Siegfried and the Nibelunge, this assumption is the more surely founded, as the story, even in heathen times, was spread abroad in Northern song[2].

If in the Heroic Traditions the mythic matter, particularly that which forms the pith of the narrative, is frequently concealed, in the Popular Traditions (Volkssagen) it is often more obvious. By the last-mentioned title we designate those narratives which, in great number and remarkable mutual accordance, are spread over all Germany, and which tell of rocks, mountains, lakes and other prominent objects. The collecting of those still preserved among the common people has, since the publication of the 'Deutsche Sagen' by the Brothers Grimm, made con-

[1] W. Müller, Altdeutsche Religion, p. 12. [2] Ib.

siderable progress. Of such narratives many, it is true, belong not to our province, some being mere obscured historic reminiscences, others owing their origin to etymologic interpretations, or even to sculpture and carvings, which the people have endeavoured to explain in their own fashion; while others have demonstrably sprung up in Christian times, or are the fruits of literature. Nevertheless, a considerable number remain, which descend from ancient times, and German mythology has still to hope for much emolument from the Popular Traditions, since those with which we are already acquainted offer a plentiful harvest of mythic matter, without which our knowledge of German heathenism would be considerably more defective than it is[1].

The Popular Tale (Volksmärchen), which usually knows neither names of persons or places, nor times, contains, as far as our object is concerned, chiefly myths that have been rent from their original connection and exhibited in an altered fanciful form. Through lively imagination, through the mingling together of originally unconnected narratives, through adaptation to the various times in which they have been reproduced and to the several tastes of listening youth, through transmission from one people to another, the mythic elements of the Popular Tales are so disguised and distorted, that their chief substance is, as far as mythology is concerned, to us almost unintelligible[2].

But Popular Traditions and Popular Tales are, after all, for the most part, but dependent sources, which can derive any considerable value only by connection with more trustworthy narratives. A yet more dependent source is the Superstitions still to be found in the country among the great mass of the people, a considerable portion of which has, in my opinion, no connection with German

[1] Müller, p. 14.

[2] Ib. p. 15.

mythology; although in recent times there is manifestly a disposition to regard every collection of popular superstitions, notions and usages as a contribution to it[1].

Among the superstitions are to be reckoned the charms or spells and forms of adjuration, which are to be uttered frequently, with particular ceremonies and usages, for the healing of a disease or the averting of a danger, and which are partly still preserved among the common people, and partly to be found in manuscripts[2]. They are for the most part in rime and rhythmical, and usually conclude with an invocation of God, Christ and the saints. Their beginning is frequently epic, the middle contains the potent words for the object of the spell. That many of these forms descend from heathen times is evident from the circumstance that downright heathen beings are invoked in them[3].

Another source is open to us in German Manners and Customs. As every people is wont to adhere tenaciously to its old customs, even when their object is no longer known, so has many a custom been preserved, or only recently fallen into desuetude, the origin of which dates from the time of heathenism, although its connection therewith may either be forgotten or so mixed up with Christian ideas as to be hardly recognisable. This observation is particularly applicable to the popular diversions and processions, which take place at certain seasons in various parts of the country. These, though frequently falling on Christian festivals, yet stand in no necessary connection with them; for which reason many may, no

[1] Müller, p. 16.

[2] Many such conjurations and spells are given by Grimm, D. M. pp. cxxvi–clix. 1st edit., and in Mone's Anzeiger, also in Altdeutsche Blätter, Bd. ii. etc.

[3] As Erce and Fasolt. See D. M. pp. cxxx–cxxxii. 1st edit. Müller, p. 21.

doubt, be regarded as remnants of pagan usages and festivals. And that such is actually the case appears evident from the circumstance, that some of these festivals, *e. g.* the kindling of fires, were at the time of the conversion forbidden as heathenish, and are also to be found in the heathenism of other nations. But we know not with what divinities these customs were connected, nor in whose honour these festivals were instituted. Of some only may the original object and probable signification be divined; but for the most part they can be considered only in their detached and incoherent state. It may also be added, that Slavish and Keltic customs may have got mingled with the German[1].

[1] Müller, p. 22. Upon this subject Grimm (D. M. Vorrede, p. xxxii.) remarks:

"Jewish and Christian doctrine began to insinuate itself into the heathen belief, heathen fancies and superstitions to press into, and, as it were, take refuge in every place not occupied by the new faith. Christian matter sometimes appears disguised in a heathen form, and heathen matter in a Christian." See a striking instance of this in the old Thuringian pagan spell at p. 23.

"As the goddess Ostara (Eastre) became changed into an idea of time, so was Hellia (Hel) into an idea of place. The belief of Antiquity in elves and giants became changed into that of angels and devils, but the old traditions remained. Woden, Thor, Tŷ, were invested with the nature of pernicious, diabolical beings, and the tradition of their solemn yearly processions was changed into that of a wild, frantic troop, from which the people shrank with dread, as they had formerly rushed forth to share in it."

"A circumstance yet more striking is, that to the Virgin Mary are transferred a number of pleasing traditions of Hold and Frouwa, the Norns and Valkyriur. How delightful are these stories of Mary, and what could any other poesy have to compare with them! With the kindly heathen characteristics are associated for us a feeling of the higher sanctity which surrounds this woman. Flowers and plants are named after Mary, images of Mary are borne in procession and placed in the forest-trees, in exact conformity with the heathen worship; Mary is the divine mother, the spinner, and appears as a helpful virgin to all who invoke her. But Mary stands not alone. In the Greek and the Latin churches a numerous host of saints sprang up around her, occupying the place of the gods of the second and third classes, the heroes and wise women of heathenism.

While the Scandinavian religion may, even as it has been transmitted to us, be regarded as a connected whole, the isolated fragments of German mythology can be considered only as the damaged ruins of a structure, for the restoration of which the plan is wholly wanting. But this plan we in great measure possess in the Northern Mythology, seeing that many of these German ruins are in perfect accordance with it. Hence we may confidently conclude that the German religion, had it been handed down to us in equal integrity with the Northern, would, on the whole, have exhibited the same system, and may, therefore, have recourse to the latter, as the only means left us of assigning a place to each of its isolated fragments[1].

Although the similitude of language and manners speaks forcibly in favour of a close resemblance between the German and Northern mythologies, yet the assumption of a perfect identity of both religions is, on that account, by no means admissible; seeing that the only original authorities for German heathenism, the Merseburg poems[2], in the little information supplied by them, show some remarkable deviations from the religious system of the North[3].

The question here naturally presents itself, by what course of events did the Odinic worship become spread

and filling the heart, because they mediate between it and a higher, severer Godhead. Among the saints also, both male and female, there were many classes, and the several cases in which they are helpful are distributed among them like offices and occupations. ..... For the hero who slew the dragon, Michael or George was substituted, and the heathen Siegberg was transferred over to Michael; as in France out of *Mons Martis* a Mons martyrum (Montmartre) was formed. It is worthy of remark that the Ossetes out of *dies Martis* (Mardi) make a George's day, and out of *dies Veneris* (Vendredi) a Mary's day. Instead of Odin and Freyia, at *minne*-drinking, St. John and St. Gertrud were substituted."

[1] Müller, p. 34. [2] See page 23. [3] Müller, p. 35.

over the larger portion of Germany and the Netherlands? By Paulus Diaconus (De Gestis Langobard. i. 8) we are informed that WODAN was worshiped as a god by all the Germanic nations. And Jonas of Bobbio (Vita S. Columbani, in Act. Bened. sec. 2. p. 26) makes mention of a vessel filled with beer, as an offering to Wodan, among the Suevi (Alamanni) on the Lake of Constance[1]. Hence it is reasonable to conclude that his worship prevailed especially among those tribes which, according to their own traditions and other historic notices, wandered from north to south[2]. Whether Wodan was regarded as a chief divinity by all the German tribes is uncertain, no traces of his worship existing among the Bavarians; and the name of the fourth day of the week after him being found chiefly in the north of Germany, but in no High German dialect[3].

The following is Snorri's account of Odin's course from the Tanais to his final settlement in Sweden:

"The country to the east of the Tanais (Tanaqvisl) in Asia was called Asaheim; but the chief city (borg) in the country was called Asgard. In this city there was a chief named Odin (Wodan), and there was a great place of sacrifice (offersted), etc.[4]

[1] Sunt etenim inibi vicinæ nationes Suevorum, quo cum moraretur et inter habitatores illius loci progrederetur, reperit eos sacrificium profanum *litare* velle, vasque magnum, quod vulgo *cupam* vocant, quod viginti et sex modios amplius minusve capiebat, *cerevisia* plenum, in medio habebant positum. Ad quod vir Dei accessit et sciscitatur quid de illo fieri vellent? Illi aiunt: deo suo Wodano, quem Mercurium vocant alii, se velle *litare*.

[2] Grimm, D. M. p. 49. Müller, pp. 80, 85.

[3] Müller, p. 86. In the Westphalian dialect Wednesday is called *Godenstag*, *Gaunstag*, *Gunstag*; in Nether Rhenish, *Gudenstag*; in Middle-age Netherlandish or Dutch, *Woensdach*; in New Netherl., *Woensdag*; in Flemish, *Goensday*; in Old Frisic, *Wernsdei*; in New Fris., *Wainsdey*; in Nor. Fris., *Winsdei*; in Anglo-Sax., *Wodenes-* and *Wodnesdæg*; in Old Nor., *Óðinsdagr*.

[4] Ynglingasaga, c. 2.

"At that time the Roman generals were marching over the world and reducing all nations to subjection; but Odin being foreknowing and possessed of magical skill, knew that his posterity should occupy the northern half of the world. He then set his brothers Ve and Vili over Asgard, but himself, with all the *diar*[1] and a vast multitude of people, wandered forth, first westwards to Gardariki[2], and afterwards southwards to Saxland[3]. He had many sons; *and after having reduced under his subjection an extensive kingdom in Saxland*, he placed his sons to defend the country. He afterwards proceeded northwards to the sea, and took up his abode in an island which is called Odins-ey in Fyen[4]. But when Odin learned that there were good tracts of land to the east in Gylfi's kingdom[5], he proceeded thither, and Gylfi concluded a treaty with him . . . . Odin made his place of residence by the Mälar lake, at the place now called Sigtuna. There he erected a vast temple[6]."

The worship of THUNAER or DONAR, the Northern Thor, among the Germans appears certain only from the Low German formula of renunciation[7] and the name of the fifth day of the week[8].

[1] The *diar* were the twelve chief priests.

[2] The Great and Little Russia of after-times.

[3] Strictly the Saxons' land; but by the Northern writers the name is applied to the whole of Germany, from the Alps in the south to the Rhine in the west.

[4] A singular inaccuracy, Odense (Ôðins ey or rather Ôðins ve) being the chief town of Fyen.

[5] See pp. 34, 132 *note* and 145 of this volume. [6] Ynglingas. cc. 5, 6.

[7] Ec forsacho allum dioboles uuercum and uuordum *thunaer* ende *wuoden* ende *saxnote* ende allem them unholdum the hira genotas sint. *I renounce all the works and words of the devil*, Thunaer *and* Woden *and* Saxnôt *and all those fiends that are their associates.* Massmann, Abschwörungsformeln, No. 1.

[8] Ohg. *Donares tac*, Toniris tac; Mhg. *Donrestac*; Mnl. *Donresdach*; Nnl. *Donderdag*; O. Fris. *Thunresdei*, *Tornsdei*; N. Fris. *Tongersdei*; Nor. Fris. *Türsdei*; A. Sax. *Thunres dæg*; O. Nor. *þórsdagr*.

The god Zio, who is identical with the Northern Týr (Týr), is nowhere directly named; but as he has given his name to the third day of the week, his right to a place in the list is established[1]. His name seems to be preserved in some local appellations in the south of Germany.

Baldur appears in the Merseburg poem under the name of Phol[2].

The Frisic god Fosite is, according to all probability, the Scandinavian Forseti[3]. Of him it is related that a temple was erected to him in Heligoland, which formerly bore the name of Fositesland. On the island there was a spring, from which no one might draw water except in silence. No one might touch any of the animals sacred to the god, that fed on the island, nor anything else found there. St. Wilibrord baptized three Frisians in the spring, and slaughtered three of the animals, for himself and his companions, but had nearly paid with his life for the profanation of the sanctuary, a crime which, according to the belief of the heathen, must be followed by madness or speedy death[4]. At a later period, as we are informed by Adam of Bremen, the island was regarded as sacred by pirates[5].

Besides the above-named five gods, mention also occurs of three goddesses, viz. Frigg, the wife of Wodan, who is spoken of by Paulus Diaconus (i. 8) under the name of *Frea*[6]. In the Merseburg poem, where she is called *Frua* or *Friia*, she appears as a sister of Volla, the Northern *Fulla*[7]. The sixth day of the week is named either after

[1] Ohg. *Ies dac*, earlier perhaps *Ziuwes tac*, later Swab. *Ziestac*. (For other forms see D. M. p. 113.) The modern German *Dienstag* is a corruption of *Diestag*. Mnl. *Disendach*; Nnl. *Dingsdach*; O. Fris. *Tysdei*; N. Fris. *Tyesdey*; Nor. Fris. *Tirsdei*; A. Sax. *Tiwes dæg*; O. Nor. *Týsdagr*.

[2] See p. 23.

[3] See p. 30.

[4] Alcuini Vita S. Wilibrordi cited by Grimm, D. M. p. 210.

[5] De Situ Daniæ, p. 132. Müller, p. 88.

[6] See D. M. p. 276.

[7] See pp. 23, 35.

her or after the Northern goddess Freyia [1], but who in Germany was probably called *Frouwa*; and the goddess Hludana, whom Thorlacius identifies with Hlodyn [2].

Of the god Saxnôt nothing occurs beyond the mention of his name in the renunciation, which we have just seen. In the genealogy of the kings of Essex a Seaxneát appears as a son of Woden [3].

As the common ancestor of the German nation, Tacitus, on the authority of ancient poems [4], places the hero or god Tuisco, who sprang from the earth; whose son Mannus had three sons, after whom are named the three tribes, viz. the Ingævones, nearest to the ocean; the Herminones, in the middle parts; and the Istævones [5].

After all it is, perhaps, from the several prohibitions, contained in the decrees of councils or declared by the laws, that we derive the greater part of our knowledge of German heathenism. Of these sources one of the most important is the Indiculus Superstitionum et Paganiarum, at the end of a Capitulary of Carloman (A.D. 743), contained in the Vatican MS. No. 577, which is a catalogue of the heathen practices that were forbidden at the council of Lestines (Liptinæ), in the diocese of Cambrai [6].

[1] The names of the sixth day of the week waver: Ohg. *Fria dag*, *Frije tag*; Mhg. *Fritac*, *Vriegtag*; Mnl. *Vridach*; O. Fris. *Frigendei*, *Fredei*; N. Fris. *Fred*; A. Sax. *Frige dæg*; O. Nor. *Friadagr*, *Freyjudagr*; Sw. Dan. *Fredag*.

[2] See page 21. Müller, p. 88.

[3] Lappenberg's England by Thorpe, i. p. 288. Müller, p. 89.

[4] Celebrant carminibus antiquis, quod unum apud illos memoriæ et annalium genus est, Tuisconem deum terra editum, etc.

[5] Germania, c. 2.

[6] Although the *Indiculus* has been frequently printed, we venture to give it a place here, on account of its importance for German Mythology.

Indiculus Superstitionum et Paganiarum.

I. De Sacrilegio ad Sepulchra Mortuorum.
II. De Sacrilegio super Defunctos, id est *Dadsisas*.
III. De Spurcalibus in Februario.

In the manuscript this catalogue is preceded by the formula of renunciation already given.

From the popular traditions and tales of Germany a sufficiently clear idea of the nature of the giants and dwarfs of Teutonic fiction may be obtained. As in the Northern belief the giants inhabit the mountains, so does German tradition assign them dwellings in mountains and caverns. Isolated mounts, sand-hills or islands have been formed by the heaps of earth which giant-maidens have let fall out of their aprons when constructing a dam or a causeway [1].

IV. De Casulis, id est Fanis.
V. De Sacrilegiis per Ecclesias.
VI. De Sacris Silvarum, quæ *Nimidas* vocant.
VII. De his quæ faciunt super petras.
VIII. De Sacris *Mercurii* vel *Jovis* (*Wodan* or *Thor*).
IX. De Sacrificio quod fit alicui Sanctorum.
X. De Phylacteriis et Ligaturis.
XI. De Fontibus Sacrificiorum.
XII. De Incantationibus.
XIII. De Auguriis vel avium vel equorum, vel bovum stercore, vel sternutatione.
XIV. De Divinis vel Sortilegis.
XV. De Igne fricato de ligno, id est *nod fyr.*
XVI. De Cerebro Animalium.
XVII. De Observatione pagana in foco vel in inchoatione rei alicujus.
XVIII. De Incertis Locis, quæ colunt pro Sacris.
XIX. De Petendo quod boni vocant Sanctæ Mariæ.
XX. De Feriis, quæ faciunt *Jovi* vel *Mercurio.*
XXI. De Lunæ defectione, quod dicunt *Vinceluna.*
XXII. De Tempestatibus et Cornibus et Cocleis.
XXIII. De Sulcis circa Villas.
XXIV. De Pagano Cursu, quem *Frias* (*Yrias*, Grimm) nominant, scissis pannis vel calceis.
XXV. De eo quod sibi sanctos fingunt quoslibet mortuos.
XXVI. De Simulacro de consparsa farina.
XXVII. De Simulacris de pannis factis.
XXVIII. De Simulacro quod per campos portant.
XXIX. De Ligneis Pedibus vel Manibus pagano ritu.
XXX. De eo quod credunt, quia Feminæ lunam commendent, quod possint corda hominum tollere juxta paganos.

[1] See vol. iii. p. 87.

Scattered fragments of rock are from structures undertaken by them in ancient times; and of the huge masses of stone lying about the country, for the presence of which the common people cannot otherwise account, it is said that they were cast by giants, or that they had shaken them out of their shoes like grains of sand [1]. Impressions of their fingers or other members are frequently to be seen on such stones. Other traditions tell of giants that have been turned into stone, and certain rocks have received the appellation of *giants' clubs* [2]. Moors and sloughs have been caused by the blood that sprang from a giant's wound, as from Ymir's [3].

In Germany, too, traces exist of the turbulent elements being considered as giants. A formula is preserved in which Fasolt is conjured to avert a storm; in another, Mermeut, who rules over the storm, is invoked [4]. Fasolt is the giant who figures so often in German middle-age poetry [5]; he was the brother of Ecke, who was himself a divinity of floods and waves [6]. Of Mermeut nothing further is known.

In the German popular tales the devil is frequently made to step into the place of the giants. Like them he has his abode in rocks [7], hurls huge stones, in which the impression of his fingers or other members is often to be seen [8], causes moors and swamps to come forth, or has his

[1] See vol. iii. p. 93.

[2] A rock near Bonn is called Fasolt's Keule (club).

[3] See page 4.

[4] Ich peut dir, Fasolt, dass du das wetter verfirst (wegführest), mir und meinen nachpauren àn schaden. D. M. p. cxxxii. 1st edit. Müller, p. 317, *sqq*.

[5] See the passages in which mention of him occurs in W. Grimm, Deutsche Heldensage.

[6] See Grimm, D. M. pp. 218, 602. Müller, pp. 310, 319.

[7] Grimm, K. and H. M. No. 125.

[8] Ib. D. S. No. 191–198, 200–205; Wolf, Niederl. Sagen, No. 178, etc.

habitation in them [1], and raises the whirlwind [2]. According to a universal tradition, compacts are frequently made with the devil, by which he is bound to complete a building, as a church, a house, a barn, a causeway, a bridge or the like within a certain short period; but by some artifice, through which the soul of the person, for whom he is doing the work, is saved, the completion of the undertaking is prevented. The cock, for instance, is made to crow; because, like the giants and dwarfs, who shun the light of the sun, the devil also loses his power at the break of day [3]. In being thus deceived and outwitted, he bears a striking resemblance to the giants, who, though possessing prodigious strength, yet know not how to profit by it, and therefore in their conflicts with gods and heroes always prove the inferior [4].

While in the giant-traditions and tales of Germany a great degree of uniformity appears, the belief in dwarfs displays considerable vivacity and variety; though no other branch of German popular story exhibits such a mixture with the ideas of the neighbouring Kelts and Slaves. This intermingling of German and foreign elements appears particularly striking on comparing the German and Keltic elf-stories, between which will be found a strong similitude,

[1] Grimm, D. S. No. 202; Harrys, i. No. 11.

[2] Stöpke, or Stepke, is in Lower Saxony an appellation of the devil and of the whirlwind, from which proceed the fogs that pass over the land. The devil sits in the whirlwind and rushes howling and raging through the air. Märk. Sagen, p. 377. The whirlwind is also ascribed to witches. If a knife be cast into it, the witch will be wounded and become visible. Schreibers Taschenbuch, 1839, p. 323. Comp. Grimm, Abergl. 522, 554; Mones Anzeiger, 8, 278. See also vol. iii. p. 23. The spirits that raise storms and hail may be appeased by shaking out a flour-sack and saying: "Siehe da, Wind, koch ein Mus für dein Kind!" (See there, Wind, boil a pap for thy child!); or by throwing a tablecloth out of the window. Grimm, Abergl. 282. Like the Wild Huntsman, the devil on Ash Wednesday hunts the *wood-wives*. Ib. 469, 914. See vol. iii. p. 60, *note* [2].

[3] See p. 8, *note* [3].

[4] Müller, p. 317.

which is hardly to be explained by the assumption of an original resemblance independent of all intercommunication [1].

Tradition assigns to the dwarfs of Germany, as the Eddas to those of the North, the interior of the earth, particularly rocky caverns, for a dwelling. There they live together as a regular people, dig for ore, employ themselves in smith's work, and collect treasures. Their activity is of a peaceful, quiet character, whence they are distinguished as *the still folk* (*the good people, the guid neighbours*); and because it is practised in secret, they are said to have a *tarncap*, or *tarnmantle* [2], or *mistmantle*, by which they can make themselves invisible. For the same reason they are particularly active at night [3].

The dwarfs in general are, as we have seen, the personification of the hidden creative powers, on whose efficacy the regular changes in nature depend. This idea naturally suggests itself both from the names borne by the dwarfs in the Eddas [4], and from the myths connected with them. These names denote for the most part either activity in general, or individual natural phenomena, as the phases of the moon, wind, etc. [5]

The activity of the dwarfs, which popular tradition symbolically signifies by smith's work, must be understood as elemental or cosmical. It applies particularly to the thriving of the fruits of the earth. We consequently frequently find the dwarfs busied in helping men in their agricultural labours, in getting in the harvest, making hay and the like, which is merely a debasement of the idea that, through their efficacy, they promote the growth and maturity of the fruits of the earth. Tradition seems

[1] Müller, p. 327.

[2] From Old Saxon dernian, A. S. dyrnan, *to conceal.* With the dwarfs the sun rises at midnight. Grimm, D. M. p. 435.

[3] Müller, p. 335. [4] See page 151. [5] Müller, p. 332.

to err in representing the dwarfs as thievish on such occasions, as stealing the produce from the fields, or collecting the thrashed-out corn for themselves; unless such stories are meant to signify that evil befalls men, if they offend those beneficent beings, and thereby cause them to suspend their efficacy, or exert it to their prejudice[1].

The same elemental powers which operate on the fruits of the earth also exercise an influence on the well-being of living creatures. Well-known and wide-spread is the tradition that the dwarfs have the power, by their touch, their breathing, and even by their look, to cause sickness or death to man and beast. That which they cause when they are offended they must also be able to remedy. Apollo, who sends the pestilence, is at the same time the healing god. Hence to the dwarfs likewise is ascribed a knowledge of the salutary virtues of stones and plants. In the popular tales we find them saving from sickness and death; and while they can inflict injury on the cattle, they often also take them under their care. The care of deserted and unprotected children is also ascribed to them, and in heroic tradition they appear as instructors[2]. At the same time it cannot be denied that tradition much more frequently tells a widely different tale, representing them as kidnapping the children of human mothers and substituting their own changelings, 'dickkopfs' or 'kielkropfs[3].' These beings are deformed, never thrive, and, in spite of their voracity, are always lean, and are, moreover, mischievous. But that this tradition is a misrepresentation, or at least a part only, of the original one, is evident from the circumstance, that when the changeling is taken back the mother finds her own child again safe and sound, sweetly smiling, and as it were waking out of

[1] Müller, p. 336.

[2] Of this description was Regin, the instructor of Sigurd. See p. 95.

[3] See page 46.

a deep sleep. It had, consequently, found itself very comfortable while under the care of the dwarfs, as they themselves also declare, that the children they steal find better treatment with them than with their own parents. By stripping this belief of its mythic garb, we should probably find the sense to be, that the dwarfs take charge of the recovery and health of sick and weakly children[1].

Hence it may also be regarded as a perversion of the ancient belief, when it is related that women are frequently summoned to render assistance to dwarf-wives in labour; although the existence of such traditions may be considered as a testimony of the intimate and friendly relation in which they stand to mankind. But if we reverse the story and assume that dwarf-wives are present at the birth of a human child, we gain an appendage to the Eddaic faith—that the Norns, who appeared at the birth of children, were of the race of dwarfs. In the traditions it is, moreover, expressly declared that the dwarfs take care of the continuation and prosperity of families. Presents made by them have the effect of causing a race to increase, while the loss of such is followed by the decline of the family[2]; for this indicates a lack of respect towards these beneficent beings, which induces them to withdraw their protection. The anger of the dwarfs, in any way roused, is avenged by the extinction of the offender's race[3].

We have here made an attempt, out of the numerous traditions of dwarfs, to set forth, in a prominent point of view, those characteristics which exhibit their nobler nature, in the supposition that Christianity may also have vilified these beings as it has the higher divinities. At the same time it is not improbable that the nature of the dwarfs, even in heathen times, may have had in it something of

[1] Müller, p. 337.
[2] See vol. iii. p. 51.
[3] Vol. ii. p. 239, and Müller, p. 339.

the mischievous and provoking, which they often display in the traditions[1].

Among the wicked tricks of the dwarfs one in particular deserves notice—that they lay snares for young females and detain them in their habitations, herein resembling the giants, who, according to the Eddas, strive to get possession of the goddesses[2]. If services are to be rendered by them, a pledge must be exacted from them[3], or they must be compelled by force; but if once overcome, they prove faithful servants and stand by the heroes in their conflicts with the giants, whose natural enemies they seem to be, though they are sometimes in alliance with them[4].

Popular tradition designates the dwarfs as heathens, inasmuch as it allows them to have power only over unbaptized children. It gives us further to understand that this belief is of ancient date, when it informs us that the dwarfs no longer possess their old habitations. They have emigrated, driven away by the sound of church bells, which to them, as heathenish beings, was hateful, or because people were malicious and annoyed them, that is, no longer entertained the same respect for them as in the time of heathenism. But that this faith was harmless, and could without prejudice exist simultaneously with Christianity, appears from the tradition which ascribes to the dwarfs Christian sentiments and the hope of salvation[5].

The Northern conception of the Norns is rendered more complete by numerous passages in the Anglo-Saxon and Old-Saxon writers. In Anglo-Saxon poetry *Wyrd* manifestly occupies the place of Urd (Urðr), the eldest Norn,

[1] Müller, p. 341.
[2] See pages 43, 55.
[3] Arndt's Märchen, i. p. 152.
[4] Müller, p. 342.
[5] Dwarfs go to church. Grimm, D. S. No. 23, 32. Kobolds are Christians, sing spiritual songs, and hope to be saved. Ib. i. pp. 112, 113. Müller, p. 342.

as the goddess of fate, who attends human beings when at the point of death; and from the 'Codex Exoniensis[1]' we learn that the influence of the Norns in the guiding of fate is metaphorically expressed as the weaving of a web, as the *μοῖραι* and parcæ are described as spinners. Thus, too, does the poet of the Heliand personify WURTH, whom, as a goddess of death, he in like manner makes an attendant on man in his last hour[2].

We find not only in Germany traditions of WISE WOMEN, who, mistresses of fate, are present at the birth of a child; but of the Keltic fairies it is also related that they hover about mortals as guardian spirits,—appearing either three or seven or thirteen together—nurse and tend new-born children, foretell their destiny, and bestow gifts on them, but among which one of them usually mingles something evil. Hence they are invited to stand sponsors, the place of honour is assigned them at table, which is prepared with the greatest care for their sake. Like the Norns, too, they spin[3].

Let us now endeavour to ascertain whether among the Germans there exist traces of a belief in the Valkyriur. In Anglo-Saxon the word wælcyrige (wælcyrie) appears as

[1] Me þæt Wyrd gewæf.	That *Wyrd* wove for me. Cod. Exon. p. 355, 1.
Wyrd oft nereð	*Wyrd* oft preserves
unfægne eorl,	an undoom'd man,
þonne his ellen deáh.	when his valour avails. Beowulf, 1139.
Him wæs Wyrd	To him was *Wyrd*
ungemete neáh.	exceedingly near. Ib. 4836.
Thiu uurd is at handum.	The *Wurd* is at hand. Heliand, p. 146, 2.
Thiu uurth nahida thuo,	The *Wurth* then drew near,
mari maht godes.	the great might of God. Ib. 163, 16.

In an Old High German gloss also we find *wurt*, fatum. Graff, i. p. 992.

The English and Scotch have preserved the word the longest, as in the *weird sisters* of Macbeth and Gawen Douglas's Virgil; the *weird elves* in Warner's Albion's England; the *weird lady of the woods* in Percy's Reliques. See Grimm, D. M. pp. 376–378 for other instances.

[2] Müller, p. 346. [3] Ib. p. 349.

an equivalent to *necis arbiter, Bellona, Alecto, Erinnys, Tisiphone*; the pl. vælcyrian to *parcæ, veneficæ*; and Anglo-Saxon poets use personally the nouns Hild and Guð, words answering to the names of two Northern Valkyriur, Hildr and Gunnr (comp. *hildr*, pugna; *gunnr*, prœlium, bellum). In the first Merseburg poem damsels, or *idisi*, are introduced, of whom "some fastened fetters, some stopt an army, some sought after bonds;" and therefore perform functions having reference to war[1]; consequently are to be regarded as Valkyriur[2].

We have still a superstition to notice, which in some respects seems to offer a resemblance to the belief in the Valkyriur, although in the main it contains a strange mixture of senseless, insignificant stories. We allude to the belief in witches and their nightly meetings.

The belief in magic, in evil magicians and sorceresses, who by means of certain arts are enabled to injure their fellow-creatures[3]—to raise storms, destroy the seed in the

[1] The following is the poem alluded to in the text, with Grimm's Latin version:

Eiris sâzun idisî,	Olim sedebant nymphæ,
sazun hera duoder,	sedebant huc atque illuc,
suma hapt heptidun	aliæ vincula vinciebant,
suma heri lezidun,	aliæ exercitum morabantur,
suma clûbôdun umbi cunioumidi,	aliæ colligebant serta,
insprincg haptbandun,	insultum diis complicibus,
inuar uîgandun.	introitum heroibus.

the last two lines of which are particularly obscure. See Grimm, ober zwei entdeckte Gedichte aus der Zeit des Deutschen Heidenthums. Berlin, 1842; also W. Wackernagels Altdeutsches Lesebuch, edit. 1842. Vorrede, p. IX. D. M. p. 372.

[2] Müller, p. 355.

[3] We subjoin the principal denominations of magicians and soothsayers, as affording an insight into their several modes of operation. The more general names are: *divini, magi, harioli, vaticinatores*, etc. More special appellations are: *sortilegi* (*sortiarii, χρησμόλογοι*), diviners by lot; *incantatores*, enchanters; *somniorum conjectores*, interpreters of dreams;

earth, cause sickness to man and beast—is of remote antiquity. It is found in the East and among the Greeks and Romans; it was known also to the Germans and Slaves in the time of their paganism, without their having borrowed it from the Romans. In it there is nothing to be sought for beyond what appears on the surface, viz. that low degree of religious feeling, at which belief supposes effects from unknown causes to proceed from supernatural agency, as from persons by means of spells, from herbs, and even from an evil glance—a degree which can subsist simultaneously with the progressing religion, and, therefore, after the introduction of Christianity, could long prevail, and in part prevails down to the present day. Even in the time of heathenism it was, no doubt, a belief that these sorceresses on certain days and in certain places met to talk over their arts and the application of them, to boil magical herbs, and for other evil purposes. For as the sorcerer, in consequence of his occult knowledge and of his superiority over the great mass of human beings, became, as it were, isolated from them, and often harboured hostile feelings towards them, he was consequently compelled to associate with those who were possessed of similar power. It must, however, be evident that the points of contact are too few to justify our seeing the ground of German belief in witch-meetings in the old heathen sacrificial festivals and assemblies. And why should we be at the pains of seeking an historic basis for a belief that rests principally on an impure, confused deisidaimonia, which finds the supernatural where it does

cauculatores and *coclearii*, diviners by offering-cups (comp. Du Fresne *sub voce*, and Indic. Superst. c. 22); *haruspices*, consulters of entrails (Capitul. VII. 370, Legg. Liutprandi VI. 30; comp. Indic. c. 16, and the divining from human sacrifices. Procop. de B. G. 2. 25); *auspices* (Ammian. Marcel. 14. 9); *obligatores*, tiers of strings or ligatures (for the cure of diseases); *tempestarii*, or *immissores tempestatum*, raisers of storms.

not exist? That mountains are particularly specified as the places of assembly, arises probably from the circumstance that they had been the offering-places of our forefathers; and it was natural to assign the gatherings of the witches to known and distinguished localities [1]. Equally natural was it that the witches should proceed to the place of assembly through the air, in an extraordinary manner, as on he-goats, broomsticks [2], oven-forks and other utensils [3].

After having thus briefly noticed the gods, the giants,

[1] The most celebrated witch-mountain is the well-known *Brocken* (*Blocksberg*) in the Harz; others, of which mention occurs, are the *Huiberg* near Halberstadt; in Thuringia the *Horselberg* near Eisenach, or the *Inselberg* near Schmalkalde; in Hesse the *Bechelsberg* or *Bechtelsberg* near Ottrau; in Westphalia the *Köterberg* near Corvei, or the *Weckingsstein* near Minden; in Swabia, in the *Black Forest*, at *Kandel* in the Brisgau, or the *Heuberg* near Balingen; in Franconia the *Kreidenberg* near Würzburg, and the *Staffelstein* near Bamberg; in Alsace the *Bischenberg* and *Büchelberg*. The Swedish trysting-place is the Bläkulla (according to Ihre, a rock in the sea between Smäland and Öland, literally the *Black Mountain*), and the *Nasafjäll* in Norrland. The Norwegian witches also ride to the *Blaakolle*, to the *Dovrefjeld*, to the *Lyderhorn* near Bergen, to *Kiärru*, to *Vardö* and *Domen* in Finmark, to *Troms* (i. e. Trommenfjeld), a mountain in the isle of Tromsö, high up in Finmark. The Neapolitan *streghe* (*striges*) assemble *under a nut-tree* near Benevento. Italian witch-mountains are: the *Barco* di Ferrara, the *Paterno* di Bologna, *Spinato* della Mirandola, *Tossale* di Bergamo and *La Croce del Pasticcio*, of the locality of which I am ignorant. In France the *Puy de Dôme*, near Clermont in Auvergne, is distinguished. Grimm, D. M. p. 1004. In Lancashire the witches assembled at Malkin Tower by the side of "the mighty Pendle," of whom the same tradition is current relative to the transforming of a man into a horse by means of a bridle, as we find in vol. ii. p. 190; also that of striking off a hand (see vol. ii. p. 32, and vol. iii. p. 26). See Roby's Popular Traditions of England, vol. ii. pp. 211–253, edit. 1841.

[2] On their way to the Blocksberg, Mephistopheles says to Faust:—

> Verlangst du nicht nach einem Besenstiele?
> Ich wünschte mir den allerderbsten Bock.
>
> Dost thou not long for a broomstick?
> I could wish for a good stout he-goat.

[3] Müller, p. 357.

the dwarfs, etc., there remains for consideration a series of subordinate beings, who are confined to particular localities, having their habitation in the water, the forests and woods, the fields and in houses, and who in many ways come in contact with man[1].

A general expression for a female demon seems to have been *minne*, the original signification of which was, no doubt, *woman*. The word is used to designate female water-sprites and wood-wives[2].

Holde is a general denomination for spirits, both male and female, but occurs oftenest in composition, as *brunnenholden*, *wasserholden* (spirits of the springs and waters). There are no *bergholden* or *waldholden* (mountain-holds, forest-holds), but dwarfs are called by the diminutive *holdechen*. The original meaning of the word is *bonus genius*, whence evil spirits are designated *un*holds[3].

The name of *Bilwiz* (also written *Pilwiz*, *Pilewis*, *Bulwechs*) is attended with some obscurity. The feminine form *Bulwechsin* also occurs. It denotes a good, gentle being, and may either, with Grimm[4], be rendered by *æquum sciens*, *æquus*, *bonus*; or with Leo by the Keltic *bilbheith*, *bilbhith* (from *bil*, good, gentle, and *bheith* or *bhith*, a being). Either of these derivations would show that the name was originally an appellative; but the traditions connected with it are so obscure and varying, that they hardly distinguish any particular kind of sprite. The Bilwiz shoots like the elf, and has shaggy or matted hair[5].

In the latter ages, popular belief, losing the old nobler idea of this supernatural being, as in the case of Holla and Berchta, retained the remembrance only of the hostile side of its character. It appears, consequently, as a torment-

[1] Müller, p. 365. [2] Ib. p. 366. [3] Ib. p. 366.

[4] D. M. p. 440, which see for further illustration of the subject; and Müller, p. 367.

[5] Bilwitzen (bilmitzen) signifies *to tangle* or *mat the hair*. Müller, p. 367.

ing, terrifying, hair- and beard-tangling, grain-cutting sprite, chiefly in a female form, as a wicked sorceress or witch. The tradition belongs more particularly to the east of Germany, Bavaria, Franconia, Voigtland and Silesia. In Voigtland the belief in the *bilsen-* or *bilver-schnitters*, or reapers, is current. These are wicked men, who injure their neighbours in a most unrighteous way: they go at midnight stark naked, with *a sickle tied on their foot*, and repeating magical formulæ, through the midst of a field of corn just ripe. From that part of the field which they have cut through with their sickle all the corn will fly into their own barn. Or they go by night over the fields with little sickles tied to their great toes, and cut the straws, believing that by so doing they will gain for themselves half the produce of the field where they have cut [1].

The *Schrat* or *Schratz* remains to be mentioned. From Old High German glosses, which translate *scratun* by pilosi, and *waltschrate* by satyrus, it appears to have been a spirit of the woods.

In the popular traditions mention occurs of a being named *Jüdel*, which disturbs children and domestic animals. When children laugh in their sleep, open their eyes and turn, it is said *the Jüdel is playing with them*. If it gets entrance into a lying-in woman's room, it does injury to the new-born child. To prevent this, a straw from the woman's bed must be placed at every door, then no Jüdel nor spirit can enter. If the Jüdel will not otherwise leave the children in quiet, something must be given it to play with. Let a new pipkin be bought, without any abatement of the price demanded; put into it some water from the child's bath, and set it on the stove. In a few days *the Jüdel will have splashed out all the water*. People also hang egg-shells, the yolks of which have been blown into

[1] Müller, p. 367.

the child's pap and the mother's pottage, on the cradle by linen threads, that the Jüdel may play with them instead of with the child. If the cows low in the night, *the Jüdel is playing with them*[1]. But what are the *Winseln*? We are informed that *the dead must be turned with the head towards the east*, else they will be terrified by the Winseln, who wander hither from the west[2].

Of the several kinds of spirits, which we classify according to the locality and the elements in which they have their abode, the principal are the demons of the water or the *Nixen*[3]. Their form is represented as resembling a human being, only somewhat smaller. According to some traditions, the Nix has slit ears, and is also to be known by his feet, which he does not willingly let be seen. Other traditions give the Nix a human body terminating in a fish's tail, or a complete fish's form. They are clothed like human beings, but the water-wives may be known by the wet hem of their apron, or the wet border of their robe. Naked Nixen, or hung round with moss and sedge, are also mentioned[4].

Like the dwarfs, the water-sprites have a great love of dancing. Hence they are seen dancing on the waves, or coming on land and joining in the dance of human beings. They are also fond of music and singing. From the depths of a lake sweetly fascinating tones sometimes ascend, oftentimes the Nixen may be heard singing. Extraordinary wisdom is also ascribed to them, which enables them to foretell the future[5]. The water-wives are said to

[1] Grimm, Abergl. No. 62, 389, 454, from the Chemnitzer Rockenphilosophie.

[2] Ib. No. 545.

[3] The male water-sprite is called *nix*, the female *nixe*. Comp. Ohg. *nichus*, crocodilus; A. S. *nicor*, pl. *niceras*; Sw. *neck*; Dan. *nök*. Hnikârr and Hnikuðr are names of Odin.

[4] Müller, p. 369.

[5] That water-sprites have the gift of prophecy has been the belief of many nations. We need only remind the reader of Nereus and Proteus.

spin. By the rising, sinking, or drying up of the water of certain springs and ponds—caused, no doubt, by the Nix—the inhabitants of the neighbourhood judge whether the seasons will be fruitful or the contrary. Honours paid to the water-spirits in a time of drought are followed by rain [1], as any violation of their sacred domain brings forth storm and tempest [2]. They also operate beneficially on the increase of cattle. They possess flocks and herds.

[1] Gregor. Tur. De Gloria Confess. cap. II.: "Mons erat in Gabalitano territorio (Gevaudan) cognomento Helanus, lacum habens magnum, ad quem certo tempore multitudo rusticorum, quasi libamina lacui illi exhibens, linteamenta projiciebat, ac pannos, qui ad usum vestimenti virilis præbentur: nonnulli lanæ vellera, plurimi etiam formas casei ac ceræ vel panis, diversasque species, unusquisque juxta vires suas, quæ dinumerare perlongum puto. Veniebant autem cum plaustris potum cibumque deferentes, mactantes animalia et per triduum epulantes. Quarta autem die, cum discedere deberent, anticipabat eos tempestas cum tonitruo et coruscatione valida; et in tantum imber ingens cum lapidum violentia descendebat, ut vix se quisquam eorum putaret evadere. Sic fiebat per singulos annos, et involvebatur insipiens populus in errore." Without doubt it was believed that the storm was in consequence of the offerings made to the spirit of the lake.

The Keltic spring of Barenton, in the forest of Breziliande, may be here mentioned. If water was poured from the spring on its margin, rain was the consequence. Wace thus speaks of it:—

> Aler i solent venéor
> A Berenton par grant chalor,
> Et o lor cors l'ewe puisier,
> Et li perron de suz moillier,
> Por ço soleient pluée aveir.—Roman de Rou, ii. p. 143.

Even at the present day processions are made to the spring, when the chief of the community dips his foot crosswise into the water. It is then believed that rain will fall before the procession reaches home. Villemarqué in Rev. de Paris, t. 41, pp. 47–58.

[2] If stones are thrown into the Mummelsee, the serenest sky becomes troubled and a storm arises. Grimm, D. S. No. 59. The belief is probably Keltish. Similar traditions are current of other lakes, as of the Lake of Pilatus, of Camarina in Sicily, etc.

which sometimes come on land and mingle with those of men and render them prolific [1].

Tradition also informs us that these beings exercise an influence over the lives and health of human beings. Hence the Nixen come to the aid of women in labour [2]; while the common story, as in the case of the dwarfs, asserts the complete reverse. The presence of Nixen at weddings brings prosperity to the bride; and new-born children are said to come out of ponds and springs; although it is at the same time related that the Nixen steal children, for which they substitute changelings. There are also traditions of *renovating springs* (Jungbrunnen), which have the virtue of restoring the old to youth [3].

The water-sprites are said to be both covetous and bloodthirsty. This character is, however, more applicable to the males than to the females, who are of a gentler nature, and even form connections with human beings, but which usually prove unfortunate. Male water-sprites carry off young girls and detain them in their habitations, and assail women with violence.

The water-sprite suffers no one from wantonness forcibly to enter his dwelling, to examine it, or to diminish its extent. Piles driven in for an aqueduct he will pull up and scatter; those who wish to measure the depth of a lake he will threaten; he frequently will not endure fishermen, and bold swimmers often pay for their temerity with their lives. If a service is rendered to the water-sprite, he will pay for it no more than he owes; though he sometimes pays munificently; and for the wares that he buys, he will bargain and haggle, or pay with old per-

[1] See vol. ii. pp. 170, 171. Müller, p. 371. [2] Märk. Sagen, No. 83.

[3] Thus the rugged Else, Wolfdietrich's beloved, bathed in such a spring and came forth the beautiful Sigeminne. Müller, p. 373.

forated coin. He treats even his relations with cruelty. Water-maidens, who have staid too late at a dance, or other water-sprites, who have intruded on his domain, he will kill without mercy: a stream of blood that founts up from the water announces the deed [1]. Many traditions relate that the water-sprite draws persons down with his net, and murders them; that the spirit of a river requires his yearly offering, etc.[2]

To the worship of water-sprites the before-cited passage from Gregory of Tours bears ample witness. The prohibitions, too, of councils against the performance of any heathen rites at springs, and particularly against burning lights at them, have, no doubt, reference to the water-sprites. In later Christian times some traces have been preserved of offerings made to the demons of the water. Even to the present time it is a Hessian custom to go on the second day of Easter to a cave on the Meisner [3], and draw water from the spring that flows from it, when flowers are deposited as an offering [4]. Near Louvain are three springs, to which the people ascribe healing virtues [5]. In the North it was a usage to cast the remnants of food into waterfalls [6].

Rural sprites cannot have been so prominent in the German religion as water-sprites, as they otherwise would have acted a more conspicuous part in the traditions. The Osnabrück popular belief tells of a *Tremsemutter*, who goes among the corn and is feared by the children. In Brunswick she is called the *Kornweib* (Cornwife). When the children seek for cornflowers, they do not venture too

[1] See vol. iii. p. 200.

[2] Müller, p. 373.

[3] A chain of hills in Electoral Hesse.

[4] The Bavarian custom also of throwing a man wrapped in leaves or rushes into the water on Whit Monday may have originated in a sacrifice to appease the water-sprite.

[5] See vol. iii. p. 270.

[6] Müller, p. 376.

far in the field, and tell one another about the Cornwife who steals little children. In the Altmark and Mark of Brandenburg she is called the Roggenmöhme [1], and screaming children are silenced by saying: "Be still, else the Roggenmöhme with her long, black teats will come and drag thee away!" Or, according to other relations, "with her black iron teats." By others she is called *Rockenmör*, because like Holda and Berchta she plays all sorts of tricks with those idle girls who have not spun all off from their spinning-wheels (Rocken) by Twelfth day. Children that she has laid on her black bosom easily die. In the Mark they threaten children with the *Erbsenmuhme* [2], that they may not feast on the peas in the field. In the Netherlands the *Long Woman* is known, who goes through the corn-fields and plucks the projecting ears. In the heathen times this rural or field sprite was, no doubt, a friendly being, to whose influence the growth and thriving of the corn were ascribed [3].

Spirits inhabiting the forests are mentioned in the older authorities, and at the present day people know them under the appellations of *Waldleute* (Forest-folk), *Holzleute* (Wood-folk), *Moosleute* (Moss-folk), *Wilde Leute* (Wild folk)[4]. The traditions clearly distinguish the Fo-

[1] From roggen, *rye*, and muhme, *aunt, cousin*.

[2] From *Erbsen*, peas.

[3] Müller, pp. 378, *sqq*. Grimm, D. M. p. 445. Adalbert Kuhn, who in the collecting of German popular traditions is indefatigable, makes us acquainted with another female being, who bears a considerable resemblance to Holda, Berchta and others of that class, and is called the *Murraue*. See more of her in vol. iii. pp. 154, *sq*.

[4] The appellation of *Schrat* (p. 245) is also applicable to the Forest-sprites. The Goth. skôhsl (*δαιμόνιον*) is by Grimm (D. M. p. 455) compared with the O. Nor. Skôgr (forest), who thence concludes that it was originally a forest-sprite. Jornandes speaks of sylvestres homines, quos *faunos ficarios* vocant. "Agrestes feminas, quas silvaticas vocant." Burchard of Worms, p. 198[d].

rest-folk from the Dwarfs, by ascribing to them a larger stature, but have little more to relate concerning them than that they stand in a friendly relation to man, frequently borrow bread and household utensils, for which they make requital [1]; but are now so disgusted with the faithless world that they have retired from it. Such narratives are in close analogy with the dwarf-traditions, and it is, moreover, related of the females, that they are addicted to the ensnaring and stealing of children [2].

On the Saale they tell of a *Buschgrossmutter* (Bush-grandmother) and her *Moosfräulein* (Moss-damsels). The Buschgrossmutter seems almost a divine being of heathenism, holding sway over the Forest-folk; as offerings were made to her. The Forest-wives readily make their appearance when the people are baking bread, and beg to have a loaf baked for them also, as large as half a millstone, which is to be left at an appointed spot. They afterwards either compensate for the bread, or bring a loaf of their own batch, for the ploughmen, which they leave in the furrow or lay on the plough, and are exceedingly angry if any one slights it. Sometimes the Forest-wife will come with a broken wheelbarrow, and beg to have the wheel repaired. She will then, like Berchta, pay with the chips that fall, which turn to gold; or to knitters she gives a clew of thread that is never wound off. As often as any one twists the stem of a sapling, so that the bark is loosed, a Forest-wife must die. A peasant woman, who had given the breast to a screaming forest-child, the mother rewarded with the bark on which the child lay. The woman broke

[1] The wood-wives (Holzweibel) come to the wood-cutters and ask for something to eat, and will also take it out of the pots; though they remunerate for what they have taken or borrowed in some other way, frequently with good advice. Sometimes they will help in the labours of the kitchen or the wash; but always express great dread of the Wild Huntsman, who persecutes them. Grimm, D. M. p. 452.

[2] Müller, p. 379.

off a piece and threw it in her load of wood: at home she found it was gold [1].

Like the dwarfs, the Forest-wives are dissatisfied with the present state of things. In addition to the causes already mentioned, they have some particular reasons. The times, they say, are no longer good since folks count the dumplings in the pot and the loaves in the oven, or since they *piped* [2] the bread, and put cumin into it. Hence their precepts:—

Peel no tree,
relate no dream,
pipe no bread, or
bake no cumin in bread,
so will God help thee in thy need.

A Forest-wife, who had just tasted a new-baked loaf, ran off to the forest screaming aloud:—

They 've baken for me cumin-bread,
that on this house brings great distress!

And the prosperity of the peasant was soon on the wane, so that at length he was reduced to abject poverty [3].

Little Forest-men, who have long worked in a mill, have been scared away by the miller's men leaving clothes and shoes for them. It would seem that by accepting clothes these beings were fearful of breaking the relation subsisting between them and men. We shall see presently that the domestic sprites act on quite a different principle [4].

[1] Grimm, D. M. p. 452.

[2] To *pipe* the bread (das Brot pipen) is to impress the points of the fingers into the loaf, as is usual in most places. Perhaps the Forest-wives could not carry off *piped* bread. From a like cause they were, no doubt, averse to the counting. Whether the seasoning with cumin displeased them merely as being an innovation, or for some hidden cause, we know not, but the rime says:—

Kümmelbrot unser Tod!	Cumin-bread our death!
Kümmelbrot macht Angst und Noth!	Cumin-bread makes pain and affliction!

[3] D. M. p. 452.

[4] Ib.

We have still a class of subordinate beings to consider, viz. the domestic sprites or *Goblins* (Kobolde). Numerous as are the traditions concerning these beings, there seems great reason to conclude that the belief in them, in its present form, did not exist in the time of heathenism; but that other ideas must have given occasion to its development. The ancient mythologic system has in fact no place for domestic sprites and goblins. Nevertheless, we believe that by tracing up through popular tradition, we shall discern forms, which at a later period were comprised under the name of Kobolds [1].

The domestic sprites bear a manifest resemblance to the dwarfs. Their figure and clothing are represented as perfectly similar; they evince the same love of occupation, the same kind, though sometimes evil, nature. We have already seen that the dwarfs interest themselves in the prosperity of a family [2], and in this respect the Kobolds may be partially considered as dwarfs, who, for the sake of taking care of the family, fix their abode in the house. In the Netherlands the dwarfs are called Kabouternannekens, that is, *Kobolds* [3].

The domestic sprite is satisfied with a small remuneration, as a hat, a red cloak, and party-coloured coat with tingling bells. Hat and cloak he has in common with the dwarfs [4].

It may probably have been a belief that the deceased members of a family tarried after death in the house as guardian and succouring spirits, and as such, a veneration might have been paid them like that of the Romans to their *lares*. It has been already shown that in the heathen times the departed were highly honoured and revered, and we shall presently exemplify the belief that the dead cleave

[1] Müller, p. 381. According to the Swedish popular belief, the domestic sprite had his usual abode in a tree near the house.

[2] See p. 11. [3] Müller, p. 382. [4] Grimm, D. M. p. 479.

to the earthly, and feel solicitous for those they have left behind. Hence the domestic sprite may be compared to a *lar familiaris*, that participates in the fate of its family. It is, moreover, expressly declared in the traditions that domestic sprites are the souls of the dead [1], and the White Lady who, through her active aid, occupies the place of a female domestic sprite, is regarded as the ancestress of the family, in whose dwelling she appears [2].

When domestic sprites sometimes appear in the form of snakes, it is in connection with the belief in *genii* or spirits who preserve the life and health of certain individuals. This subject, from the lack of adequate sources, cannot be satisfactorily followed up; though so much is certain, that as, according to the Roman idea, the genius has the form of a snake [3], so, according to the German belief, this creature was in general the symbol of the soul and of spirits. Hence it is that in the popular traditions much is related of snakes which resembles the traditions of domestic sprites. Under this head we bring the tradition, that in every house there are two snakes, a male and a female, whose life depends on that of the master or mistress of the family. They do not make their appearance until these die, and then die with them. Other traditions tell of snakes that live together with a child, whom they watch in the cradle, eat and drink with it. If the snake is killed, the child declines and dies shortly after. In general, snakes bring luck to the house in which they take up their abode, and milk is placed for them as for the domestic sprites [4].

[1] Kobolds are the souls of persons that have been murdered in the house. Grimm, D. S. No. 71. A knife sticks in their back. Ib. i. p. 224.

[2] See vol. iii. p. 9.

[3] Servius in Virgil, Æn. v. 85. "Nullus locus sine genio est, qui per anguem plerumque ostenditur."

[4] Müller, p. 383.

We will now give a slight outline of the externals of divine worship among the heathen Germans.

The principal places of worship were, consistently with the general character of the Germans, in the free, open nature. The expression of Tacitus was still applicable—"lucos ac nemora consecrant." Groves consecrated to the gods are therefore repeatedly mentioned, and heathen practices in them forbidden [1]. In Lower Saxony, even in the eleventh century, they had to be rooted up, by Bishop Unwan of Bremen, in order totally to extirpate the idolatrous worship [2]. But still more frequently, as places of heathen worship, trees and springs are mentioned, either so that it is forbidden to perform any idolatrous rites at them, or that they are directly stigmatized as objects of heathen veneration [3]. At the same time we are not justified

[1] Lucos vetusta religione truces. Claud. Cons. Stilich. I. 289; De sacris silvarum, quæ Nimidas vocant. Indic. Superst. 6; Lucorum vel fontium auguria. Bonifac. Ep. 44. ed. Würdtw.; Si quis ad lucos votum fecerit. Capit. de Part. Saxon. c. 21. Comp. Capit. Francof. a. 794, c. 41; Sylvam Sytheri, quæ fuit Thegathon sacra. Pertz, Monum. ii. 377. For the name of Thegathon see D. M. p. 65.

[2] Vita Meinwerci, c. 22; comp. Adam. Brem. c. 86.

[3] Claud. Cons. Stilich. I. 290: Robora numinis instar barbarici; Agathias, 28. 4. edit. Bonn., of the Alamanni: *δένδρα τε γάρ τινα ἱλάσκονται καὶ ῥεῖθρα ποταμῶν καὶ λόφους καὶ φάραγγας, καὶ τούτοις ὥσπερ ὕσια ῥῶντες.* Gregor. Tur. II. c. 10. of the Franks: sibi silvarum atque aquarum, avium, bestiarum et aliorum quoque elementorum finxere formas, ipsasque ut deum colere ejusque sacrificia delibare consueti. Comp. Gregor. M. Epist. 7, 5: ne idolis immolent, nec cultores arborum existant. Rudolf of Fulda (Pertz, ii. 676) of the Saxons: Frondosis arboribus fontibusque veneracionem exhibebant. In the Lives of the Saints sacred trees are particularly noticed. In the first place the oak dedicated to Jupiter, at Gheismar near Fritzlar, which St. Boniface cut down, is to be mentioned: Wilibaldi Vita Bonifacii (Pertz, ii. 343): Arborem quandam miræ magnitudinis, quæ prisco paganorum vocabulo appellatur *robur Jovis*, in loco qui dicitur Gæsmere, servis Dei secum astantibus, succidere tentavit. Vita S. Amandi (ob. 674), Mabillon, Act. Bened. sec. 2. p. 714: arbores et ligna pro deo colere; and p. 718: ostendit ei locum, in quo prædictum idolum adorare consueverat, scilicet arborem, quæ erat dæmoni dedicata. Audoeni Roto-

in assuming that a sort of fetish adoration of trees and springs existed among them, and that their religious rites were unconnected with the idea of divine or semi-divine beings, to whom they offered adoration; for the entire character of the testimonies cited in the note sufficiently proves that through them the externals only of the pagan worship have been transmitted to us, the *motives* of which the transmitters either did not or would not know [1].

As sacred spots, at which offerings to the gods were made, those places were particularly used where there were trees and springs. The trees were sacred to the gods,

mag. Vita Eligii II. c. 16: Nullus Christianus ad fana, vel ad petras, vel ad fontes, vel ad arbores, aut ad cellos, vel per trivia luminaria faciat, aut vota reddere præsumat.—nec per fontes aut arbores, vel bivios diabolica phylacteria exerceantur.—fontes vel arbores, quos sacros vocant, succidite. On the *Bloody Tree* of the Langobards, Vita S. Barbati (ob. 683), Act. S.S. 19 Feb. p. 139: Quinetiam non longe a Beneventi mœnibus devotissime sacrilegam colebant arborem. Comp. Leges Liutpr. VI. 30: Qui ad arborem, quam rustici sanguinum (*al.* sanctivam, sacrivam) vocant, atque ad fontanas adoraverit. The prohibitions in the decrees of the councils and the laws usually join trees with springs, or trees, springs, rocks and crossways together. Conc. Autissiod. a. 586, c. 3: ad arbores sacrivas vel ad fontes vota exsolvere. Comp. Conc. Turon. II. a. 566, c. 22; Indic. Superst. c. 11: Burchard of Worms, Collect. Decret. X. 10 (Conc. Namnet. a. 895, c. 8): arbores dæmonibus consecratæ, quas vulgus colit et in tanta veneratione habet, ut nec ramum vel surculum audeat amputare. Ib. XIX. 5 (comp. D. M. p. XXXVI. 1st edit.): Venisti ad aliquem locum ad orandum nisi ad ecclesiam, i.e. vel ad fontes, vel ad lapides, vel ad bivia, et ibi aut candelam aut faculam pro veneratione loci incendisti, aut panem aut aliquam oblationem illuc detulisti, aut ibi comedisti? Comp. X. 2. 9. Capitul. de Part. Sax. c. 21: Si quis ad fontes, aut arbores, vel lucos votum fecerit, aut aliquid more gentilium obtulerit et ad honorem dæmonum comederit. Capit. Aquisgr. I. c. 63: De arboribus, vel petris, vel fontibus, ubi aliqui stulti luminaria accendunt, vel aliquas observationes faciunt. Comp. Capit. Francof. a. 794, c. 41. Capitt. lib. I. c. 62, VII. 316, 374, Lex Wisigoth. lib. VI. 2, 4. Ecgb. Penit. IV. 19. Law of North. Priests, 54; Leges Cnuti, Sec. 5; Can. Eadgari, 16. Whether all the passages which refer to Gaul are applicable to German heathenism is not always certain, as trees and springs were held sacred also by the Kelts.

[1] Müller, p. 58.

whose festivals were solemnized near or under them; an instance of which is the oak sacred to Jupiter, which Boniface caused to be felled. These trees, as we shall presently see, were, at the sacrificial feasts, used for the purpose of hanging on them either the animals sacrificed or their hides, whence the Langobardish Blood-Tree derives its name[1]. Similar was the case with regard to the springs at which offerings were made; they were also sacred to the god whose worship was there celebrated, as is confirmed by the circumstance, that certain springs in Germany were named after gods and were situated near their sanctuaries[2]. How far these were needful in sacrificial ceremonies, and in what manner they were used, we know not[3].

But the worship of trees and springs may in reality have consisted in a veneration offered to the spirits who, according to the popular faith, had their dwelling in them; tradition having preserved many tales of beings that inhabited the woods and waters, and many traces of such veneration being still extant, of which we shall speak hereafter. It seems, however, probable that the worship of such spirits, who stood in a subordinate relation to the gods, was not so prominent and glaring that it was deemed necessary to issue such repeated prohibitions against it[4].

This double explanation applies equally to the third locality at which heathen rites were celebrated—stones

[1] If such be the true reading, which is very questionable (see note, p. 256). The word *blood* has no connection with the verb blôtan, *to sacrifice*.

[2] Müller, pp. 58–61. Near the grove of the Frisian god Fosite there was a sacred spring. Comp. Vita S. Remacli, c. 12: Warchinnam rivulum accedit (the scene of the incident was the Ardennes), invenit illic certa indicia loca illa quondam idololatriæ fuisse mancipata. Erant illic lapides Dianæ, et id genus portentosis nominibus inscripti, vel effigies eorum habentes; *fontes* etiam, hominum quidem usibus apti, sed gentilismi erroribus polluti, atque ob id etiamnum dæmonum infestationi obnoxii.

[3] Müller, p. 61.

[4] Ib. p. 62.

and rocks[1]. In stones, according to the popular belief, the dwarfs had their abode; but principally rugged stone altars are thereby understood, such as still exist in many parts of Germany[2].

We are unable to say with certainty whether the beforementioned offering-places served at the same time as burying-grounds of the dead, a supposition rendered probable by the number of urns containing ashes, which are often found on spots supposed to have been formerly consecrated to heathen worship. But the graves of the dead, at all events, seem designated as offering-places[3]. That such offerings at graves were sometimes made to the souls of the departed, who after death were venerated as higher and beneficent beings, may be assumed from the numerous prohibitions, by the Christian church, against *offering to saints*, and regarding the dead indiscriminately as holy[4]; although not all the *sacrificia mortuorum* and the heathen observances, which at a later period took place at burials[5], may have had reference to the dead, but may

[1] See p. 255, *note* [3]. Comp. Indic. Superst. c. 7. Conc. Namnet. c. 20: lapides, quos in ruinosis locis et silvestribus dæmonum ludificationibus decepti venerantur, ubi et vota vovent et deferunt. Eccard, Fran. Orient. i. p. 415.

[2] Müller, p. 62.

[3] Burchard, 19. 5: Comedisti aliquid de idolothito, i. e. de oblationibus quæ in quibusdam locis *ad sepulchra* mortuorum fiunt, vel ad fontes, aut ad arbores, aut ad lapides, aut ad bivia.

[4] Indic. Superst. c. 9: De sacrificio quod fit alicui sanctorum; c. 25: De eo quod sibi sanctos fingunt quoslibet mortuos. Conc. Germ. a. 742. can. 5 (comp. Capitul. VII. 128): ut populus Dei paganias non faciat, sed omnes spurcities gentilitatis abjiciat et respuat, sive profana sacrificia mortuorum, sive hostias immolatitias, quas stulti homines juxta ecclesias ritu pagano faciunt, sub nomine sanctorum martyrum vel confessorum.

[5] Indic. Superst. cc. 1, 2. Burchard, 10, 34. Bonifac. Ep. 44: sacrificia mortuorum respuentes. Ep. 82: sacrilegis presbyteris, qui tauros et hircos diis paganorum immolabant, manducantes sacrificia mortuorum. Capit. VI. 197: Admoneantur fideles ut ad suos mortuos non agant ea quæ de paganorum ritu remanserunt. Et quando eos ad sepulturam portaverint, illum ululatum excelsum non faciant.....et super eorum tumulos

also have had the gods for object. Hence we may safely conclude that all the heathen rites, which were performed at springs, stones and other places, had a threefold reference: their object being either the gods, the subordinate elementary spirits, or the dead; but in no wise were lifeless objects of nature held in veneration by our forefathers for their own sakes alone[1].

It now remains for consideration whether the gods were worshiped only in such places in the open air, or whether temples were erected to them. In answer to this question we shall limit ourselves to a few general observations[2].

In general it appears that temples, even at the period of the conversion, were, as in the time of Tacitus, but few. In the interior of Germany it is probable that none existed; for, had the case been otherwise, we should hardly have been without some notice of a temple among the Saxons[3]. There is, however, little doubt that the Frisians had temples; for the words of the Lex Frisionum: "Qui templum effregerit ..... immoletur diis, quorum templa violavit[4]."

nec manducare nec bibere præsumant. Towards the middle of the ninth century the Roman synod under Leo IV. forbade to the Saxons the *carmina diabolica*, quæ nocturnis horis super mortuos vulgus facere solet. Comp. Wackernagel, Das Wessobrunner Gebet, p. 25.

[1] Müller, p. 63.

[2] Grimm has collected and discussed all the authorities which make mention of temples among the German tribes. See D. M. pp. 70–77. Müller, p. 65.

[3] The passage of the Capitulary de Part. Saxon. I.: "ut ecclesiæ Christi non minorem habeant honorem, sed majorem et excellentiorem quam fana (ap. Pertz vana) habuissent idolorum," is rejected by Schaumann, Gesch. des Niedersächs. Volks, p. 133. Comp. Beda's account of the destruction of the Anglian temple at Godmundham in Yorkshire (a. 627), also in Lappenberg's England, i. pp. 151–153.

[4] Lex Frisionum Addit. Sap. XII. According to the Vita S. Liudgeri, I. 8, treasures were kept in the Frisian temples. Comp. also "*fana* in morem gentilium circumquaque erecta" in the Vita S. Willehadi (ob. 789), ap. Pertz, ii. 381, and the *fana* of Fosite in Vita S. Willebrordi (ob. 739) in Act. Bened. sec. 3, p. 609; Altfridi Vita S. Liudgeri ap. Pertz, ii. 410.

precludes all doubt on the subject. But with respect to the temples, of which mention is made, either on the Rhine or in Gaul (where the greater number occur), it is doubtful whether they are not rather to be considered as Keltic, which the invading Franks and Burgundians appropriated to themselves; as heathenism is inclined to dedicate to its own worship places regarded by others as holy. With respect to other places, the accounts supplied by the authorities are so vague, that it cannot be pronounced with certainty whether the question is of a temple or a grove, as the "fanum arboribus consitum," which is mentioned among the Langobardi [1], can certainly have been only a grove. The fourth chapter of the Indiculus, "De casulis, i. e. fanis," may refer to small buildings, in which probably sacrificial utensils or sacred symbols were kept [2].

The paucity of temples among the Germans implies also a paucity of idols among them; for the heathen temple did not, like a Christian church, serve for the reception of a holyday congregation, but was originally a mere shelter or house for the image of the god. Certainly we are not justified in totally denying the presence of images; as it is expressly stated that the Gothic king Athanric (ob. 382) caused a carved image to be carried about [3], which, like Nerthus, was everywhere received with prayers and offerings. Nor are we, at the same time, justified in assuming the fact of their existence among all the German nations; and although in the authorities *idola* and *simulacra* are repeatedly mentioned, and great zeal is manifested against the folly of the heathen, in expecting aid from images of gold, silver, stone and wood; yet are these only general forms of speech directed against idolatry, and

[1] Vita S. Bertulfi Bobbiensis (ob. 640), in Act. Bened. sec. 2, p. 164.
[2] Müller, p. 65.
[3] *ξόανον ἐφ' ἁρμαμάξης ἑστώς.* Sozomen. Hist. Eccles. vi. 37.

applying rather to Roman than German heathenism[1]. We have in fact no genuine or trustworthy testimony that clearly describes to us an idol in Germany Proper. In no Life of a saint is it related that a converter destroyed such an idol. On the contrary, all the passages, which here enter into consideration, point either to a blending of foreign worship, or, on closer examination, there is no question in them of an idol, or they are of doubtful character[2].

The three brazen and gilt images, which St. Gall found and destroyed at Bregenz on the Lake of Constance, built into the wall of a church dedicated to St. Aurelia, and venerated by the people as gods, were no doubt of Roman origin[3], like those stone images which St. Columban (ob. 615) met with at Luxeuil in Franche Comté[4]. The statue of Diana at Treves, and the images of Mars and Mercury in the south of Gaul, of which Gregory of Tours makes mention[5], are likewise rather Roman or Keltic than German. Not even the noted and in other respects remarkable passage of Widukind (I. 12), according to which the Saxons, after their victory over the Thuringians on the Unstrut, raised an altar and worshiped a god "nomine Martem, *effigie columnarum* imitantes Herculem, loco Solem,

[1] Similar forms of speech are numerous: e. g. Gregor. Tur. Hist. Franc. II. 29. Willibald, Vita Bonifac. II. 339, ap. Pertz. Vita Willehadi, ib. II. 380. Bonifac. Ep. 6; Vita Lebuini, ib. II. 362. Vita S. Kiliani in Act. Bened. sec. 2. p. 992. *Idola* was the usual denomination of the heathen gods. The passages, however, in the Vita Bonifacii and Vita Willehadi, which refer to the Frisians, may appear convincing, as they had temples also.

[2] Müller, p. 65.

[3] Walafrid. Strab. Vita S. Galli, in Act. Bened. sec. 2. p. 233. Comp. Vita S. Galli ap. Pertz, ii. 7; Ratperti Casus S. Galli. ap. Pertz, ii. 61.

[4] Jonæ Bobbiensis Vita S. Columbani, c. 17, in Act. Bened. sec. 2. pp. 12, 13.

[5] Hist. Franc. VIII. 15. Mirac. 2. 5: grande delubrum, ubi in columna altissima simulacrum Martis Mercuriique colebatur.

quem Græci appellant Apollinem," appears to us unquestionably to indicate a true idol. We can infer from the words of Widukind nothing more than the erection of a column similar to the Irmenseule at Eresburg, which Charles the Great destroyed. In the passages which relate to this latter[1] it is called sometimes *idolum*, sometimes *fanum*, sometimes *lucus*; but the word itself shows that Rudolf of Fulda was right in defining it "truncum ligni non parvæ magnitudinis in altum erectum," nor is his expression for it of "universalis columna" an unfitting one[2].

The history of the development of Greek and Roman image worship may aid us to a clearer insight into our native heathenism. The Greek representation of a god had not from the commencement the pretension of being a likeness of the god, but was only a symbol of his presence, for a sense of which the piety of ancient times required the less of externals the more deeply it was impressed with the belief of that presence[3]. An external sign of the divinity was, nevertheless, necessary for the sake of having an object on which pious veneration of the gods might manifest itself. As, therefore, both in Hellas and Italy, the antique representations of the gods, as lances, etc., were mere symbols, in like manner we may regard the swords of the Quadi and the golden snakes of the Langobardi only as consecrated signs announcing the presence of the god. The representations of the gods next developed themselves, among the Greeks, under the form of rough stones, stone pillars and wooden poles, which were

[1] See the passages relating to the Irmenseule in Meibom. de Irminsula Saxonica, in Rer. Germ. Scriptt. iii. pp. 2, *sq.* D. M. pp. 105, *sq.* Comp. also Ideler's Einhard, i. 156, *sq.*

[2] Müller, p. 67. Rudolf. Fuld. Transl. S. Alexandri, ap. Pertz, ii. 676.

[3] O. Müller, Handbuch der Archæologie der Kunst, § 66.

set up and regarded as images of the gods. Raised-up poles or beams were, no doubt, also among the Germans the prevailing and still symbolic species of images. The Irmensеule was such a pole: to such an image, if so it can be called, to a simple up-raised pillar, does the before-quoted passage of Widukind allude[1].

That prayers to the gods were frequently composed in a metrical form, that religious songs and poems existed, is evident from the circumstance that the Langobardi offered to one of their gods the head of a goat, with certain ceremonies and accompanied by a song[2]. The passage which gives this account affords ground for the supposition that certain saltations took place at the sacrifices. And why should there not be religious songs at this period, when, at a still earlier, songs in honour of Hercules were sung before a battle, when Tacitus makes mention of old mytho-epic songs in which the traditions of the German people were recorded? The oldest poetry of a nation generally attaches itself closely to religion, and the numerous forms of adjurations and spells, which through tradition we have inherited from heathenism, are for the most part composed in a rhythmical garb. It may, therefore, be reasonably supposed that the popular songs were, in the first Christian centuries, so bitterly decried by the clergy because they contained many remains of heathenism, and, consequently, seemed perilous to Christianity. The stigmatizing of the popular songs as *carmina diabolica*, the predicates *turpia, inepta, obscœna* applied to them give to this supposition additional strength; and the Capitularies explicitly forbid dances and songs as relics of

[1] Müller, p. 70.

[2] Gregor. M. Dialog. III. 28: Caput capræ ei (diabolo) per circuitum currentes, carmine nefando dedicantes. In the grove of sacrifice by Upsala *næniæ inhonestæ* resounded. Ad. Brem. p. 144, edit. Lindenbrog.

heathenism[1]. At funerals also heathen religious songs were sung[2].

With prayer, sacrifice, which formed the chief part of heathen worship, was inseparably connected. In general there was prayer only at the sacrifices. The principal sacrifice was a human one, the offering of which by all the Germanic races is fully proved[3]. Human beings appear chiefly to have served for sacrifices of atonement, and were either offered to the malign deities, or, as propitiatory, to the dead in the nether world[4]. The custom of burning the servants and horses with the corpse, must, therefore, be understood as a propitiatory sacrifice to the shade of the departed[5].

The testimonies just cited on the subject of human

[1] Capit. VI. c. 196: Illas vero balationes et saltationes, cantica turpia et luxuriosa, et illa lusa diabolica non faciat, nec in plateis nec in domibus neque in ullo loco, quia hæc de paganorum consuetudine remanserunt. Vita S. Eligii, II. 16: Nullas saltationes, aut choraulas, aut cantica diabolica exerceat. For the prohibitions of the ancient popular songs, the reader is referred to the collections of extracts on the subject, as Wackernagel, Das Wessobrunner Gebet, pp. 25–29; Hofmann, Geschichte des Deutschen Kirchenliedes, pp. 8–11; Massmann, Abschwörungsformeln.

[2] Müller, p. 74.

[3] For human sacrifices among the Goths, see Jornandes, c. 5; Isidori Chron. Goth. æra 146; among the Heruli, Procop. de Bello Goth. II. 14; among the already converted Franks, ib. II. 25; the Saxons, Sidon. Apoll. 8. 6, Capit. de Part. Sax. 9; the Frisians, Lex Fris. Addit. Sap. Tit. 12; Thuringians, Bonifac. Ep. 25. Comp. D. M. p. 39.

[4] The great sacrifice at Lethra, described by Dietmar of Merseburg, I. 9, at which ninety-nine men, and a like number of horses, dogs and cocks were offered, was evidently a sacrifice of propitiation.

[5] Müller, p. 76. Tacitus (Germ. 27) testifies only to the burning of the horse. In the North servants and hawks were burnt with the corpse. In the grave of King Childeric a human skull was found, which was supposed to have been that of his marshal. The wives of the Heruli hanged themselves at the graves of their husbands. Procop. B. G. II. 14. Among the Gauls also it was customary to burn the slaves and clients with the corpse of a man of high rank. Cæsar, B. G. IV. 19.

sacrifices inform us at the same time that prisoners of war —as in the time of Tacitus—purchased slaves or criminals were especially chosen for sacrifice[1]. When a criminal was sacrificed, his death was at the same time the penalty of his misdeeds. He was offered to the god whom, it was believed, he had particularly offended, and his execution, decreed by the law, was reserved for the festival of that divinity. This usage, which gives an insight into the intimate connection between law and religion, and shows the punishment of death among the Germans in a peculiar light, is particularly conspicuous among the Frisians. This people put criminals chosen for sacrifice to death in various ways; they were either decapitated with a sword, or hanged on a gallows, or strangled, or drowned[2]. A more cruel punishment awaited those who had broken into and robbed the temple of a god[3].

Of animals used for sacrifice, horses, oxen and goats are especially mentioned. The horse-sacrifice was the most considerable, and is particularly characteristic of the Germanic races. The heads were by preference offered to the gods, and were fixed or hung on trees. The hides also of the sacrificed animals were suspended on sacred trees. In the North the flesh of the sacrifices was boiled, and the door-posts of the temple were smeared with their blood[4].

[1] According to the Vita S. Wulframmi (ob. 720) in Act. Bened. sec. 3, pp. 359, 361, the individuals to be sacrificed were sometimes chosen by lot. The accounts given in this Life seem rather fabulous, but are, nevertheless, not to be rejected. S. Willibrord and his companions, when they had desecrated the sanctuary of Fosite, were subjected to the lot, and the one on whom the lot fell was executed. Alcuini Vita S. Willibr. c. 10. Among the Slaves also human sacrifices were determined by lot. Jahrb. für Slaw. Lit. 1843, p. 392.

[2] Vita S. Wulframmi, p. 360.

[3] Müller, p. 77. Lex Frisionum, Addit. Sap. Tit. 12. Qui fanum effregerit et ibi aliquid de sacris tulerit, ducitur ad mare, et in sabulo, quod accessus maris operire solet, finduntur aures ejus, et castratur, et immolatur diis, quorum templa violavit.

[4] Müller, p. 79.

The Indiculus (cap. 26) leads to the supposition of a particular kind of offering. The *Simulacrum de consparsa farina* there mentioned appears to be the baked image of a sacrificial animal, which was offered to the gods in the stead of a real one. Similar usages are known to us among the Greeks and Romans, and in Sweden, even in recent times, it was a custom on Christmas eve to bake cakes in the form of a hog[1].

It was extremely difficult to prevent a relapse into heathenism, seeing that to retain a converted community in the true faith, well-instructed ecclesiastics were indispensable, and these were few in number, the clergy being but too frequently persons of profane and ungodly life. In many cases it was doubtful whether they had even received ordination[2]. Instances might therefore occur like that recorded in the Life of St. Gall, that in an oratory dedicated to St. Aurelia idols were afterwards worshiped with offerings[3]; and we have seen that the Franks, *after their conversion*, in an irruption into Italy, still sacrificed human victims. Even when the missionaries believed their work sure, the return of the season, in which the joyous heathen festivals occurred, might in a moment call to remembrance the scarcely repressed idolatry; an interesting instance of which, from the twelfth century, we shall see presently. The priests, whose duty it was to retain the people in their Christianity, permitted themselves to sacrifice to the heathen gods, if, at the same time, they could perform the rite of baptism[4]. They were addicted to magic and soothsaying[5], and were so infatu-

[1] Müller, p. 80. See vol. ii. p. 50.

[2] Bonifac. Ep. 38, 46.

[3] See page 249.

[4] Bonifac. Ep. 25: Qui a presbytero Jovi mactante et immolatitias carnes vescente baptizati sunt. Comp. Ep. 82 and Capitul. vii. 405.

[5] Statut. Bonifac. 33, p. 142, ed. Würdtw.: Si quis presbyter aut clericus auguria, vel divinationes, aut somnia, sive sortes, seu phylacteria, id est, scripturas, observaverit.

ated with heathenism that they erected crosses on hills, and with great approbation of the people, celebrated Christian worship on heathen offering-places[1].

But the clergy were under the necessity of suffering much heathenism to remain, if they would not totally disturb and subvert the social order of life. Heathen institutions of a political nature might no more be attacked than others, which a significant and beneficial custom had made venerable and inviolable. The heathen usages connected with legal transactions must for the most part remain, if the clergy would not also subvert the law itself, or supplant it by the Roman code, according to which they themselves lived. Hence the place and time of the judicial assemblies remained unchanged in their connection with the heathen offering-places and festivals[2]; although the offerings which had formerly been associated with these meetings had altogether ceased. In like manner the old heathen ordeals maintained their ground, though in a Christian guise. Offenders must be punished, and the clergy patiently saw heathen practices accompanying the punishment, because the culprit was an unworthy Christian[3]. In

[1] Müller, p. 103. Bonifac. Ep. 87: Pseudosacerdotes, qui sine episcopo, proprio arbitrio viventes, populares defensores habentes contra episcopos, ut sceleratos mores eorum non confringant, seorsum populum consentaneum congregant, et illud erroneum ministerium non in ecclesia catholica, sed per agrestia loca, per colles rusticorum, ubi eorum imperita stultitia celari episcopos possit, perpetrant, nec fidem catholicam paganis prædicant, nec ipsi fidem rectam habent. Of the Frankish priest Adalbert it is said, that he seduced the people, ita ut cruces statuens in campis et oratoriola, illuc faciat populum concurrere, publicasque ecclesias relinquere. Comp. Ep. 59, 67.

[2] Grimm, Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer, 793, 822.

[3] E. g. When criminals were hanged with wolves or dogs, which at a later period was regarded as particularly ignominious. Grimm, D. R. A. 685. Criminals were buried in crossways, the old heathen offering-places, and the gallows stood at the intersection. Ib. 720, 683. In general, certain customs at executions, as dragging the criminal on a cowhide, are probably regarded as the more ignominious, because they were originally heathen.

matters of warfare and the heathenism still practised in the field, the clergy were equally powerless. Hence the *Christian* Franks, as we have already seen, when they invaded Italy, sacrificed men, while such cruelty in ordinary life had long been abolished among them. Thus did much heathenism find its way back during the first Christian age, or maintained its ground still longer, because it was sanctioned by law and usage. Where the converters in their blind zeal would make inroads into the social relations, the admission of Christianity met with many hindrances. The teaching of St. Kilian had found great favour with the Frankish duke Gozbert; but when he censured that prince for having espoused a relation, he paid for his presumption with his life. Among the Saxons Christianity encountered such strong opposition, because with its adoption was connected the loss of their old national constitution[1].

As the missionaries thus found themselves obliged to proceed with caution, and were unable to extirpate heathenism at one effort, they frequently accommodated themselves so far to the heathen ideas as to seek to give them a Christian turn. Many instances of such accommodations can be adduced. On places, for instance, regarded by the heathen as sacred, Christian churches were constructed[2], or, at least crosses there erected[3], that they

[1] Müller, p. 104.

[2] Vita S. Agili Resbac. in Act. Bened. sec. 2. p. 317; Vita S. Amandi, ib. p. 715; Vita Liudgeri ap. Pertz, II. p. 410; Gregor. M. Ep. ad Mellitum (Beda, H. E. I. 30): "Dicite ei (Augustino) quid diu mecum de causa Anglorum cogitans tractavi: videlicet, quia fana idolorum destrui in eadem gente minime debeant; sed ea quæ in ipsis sunt idola destruantur; aqua benedicta fiat, in eisdem fanis aspergatur, altaria construantur, reliquiæ ponantur; quia si fana eadem bene constructa sunt, necesse est ut a cultu dæmonum in obsequium veri Dei debeant commutari, ut, dum gens ipsa eadem fana sua non videt destrui, de corde errorem deponat, et Deum verum cognoscens et adorans, ad loca quæ consuevit familiarius concurrat."

[3] Mone, Gesch. des Heidenthums, ii. 52. Schreiber, die Feen in Europa, p. 18.

might no longer be used for heathen worship, and that the people might the more easily accustom themselves to regard them as holy in a Christian sense. The wood of the oak felled by Boniface[1] was made into a pulpit, and of the gold of the Langobardish snake[2] altar-vessels were fabricated. Christian festivals were purposely appointed on days which had been kept as holy days by the heathens; or heathenish festivals, with the retention of some of their usages, were converted into Christian ones[3]. If, on the one side, through such compromises, entrance was gained for Christianity, so on the other they hindered the rapid and complete extirpation of heathenism, and occasioned a mixture of heathenish ideas and usages with Christian ones[4].

To these circumstances it may be ascribed that heathenism was never completely extirpated, that not only in the first centuries after the conversion, an extraordinary blending of heathenism and Christianity existed, but that even at the present day many traces of heathen notions and usages are to be found among the common people. As late as the twelfth century the clergy in Germany were still occupied in eradicating the remains of heathenism[5].

The missionaries saw in the heathen idols and in the

[1] See page 257. [2] See page 262.

[3] In the letter just cited of Gregory it is further said: "Et quia boves solent in sacrificio dæmonum multos occidere, debet eis etiam hac de re aliqua sollemnitas immutari; ut die dedicationis, vel natalitiis sanctorum martyrum, quorum illic reliquiæ ponuntur, tabernacula sibi circa easdem ecclesias, quæ ex fanis commutatæ sunt, de ramis arborum faciant, et religiosis conviviis sollemnitatem celebrent; nec diabolo jam animalia immolent, sed ad laudem Dei in esu suo animalia occidant, et Donatori omnium de satietate sua gratias referant; ut dum eis aliqua exterius gaudia reservantur, ad interiora gaudia consentire facilius valeant. Nam duris mentibus simul omnia abscidere impossibile esse non dubium est; quia et is, qui summum locum ascendere nititur, gradibus vel passibus, non autem saltibus elevatur."

[4] Müller, p. 106. [5] Ib. p. 108.

adoration paid to them only a delusion of the devil, who, under their form, had seduced men to his worship, and even believed that the images of the gods and the sacred trees were possessed by the evil one. Thus they did not regard the heathen deities as so many perfect non-entities, but ascribed to them a real existence, and, to a certain degree, stood themselves in awe of them. Hence their religion was represented to the heathens as a work of the devil, and the new converts were, in the first place, required to renounce him and his service. In this manner the idea naturally impressed itself on the minds of the people that these gods were only so many devils; and if any person, in the first period of Christianity, was brought to doubt the omnipotence of the God of the Christians, and relapsed into idolatry, the majority regarded such apostasy as a submission to the devil. Hence the numerous stories of compacts with the evil one, at which the individual, who so devoted himself, must abjure his belief in God, Christ, and the Virgin Mary, precisely as the newly converted Christian renounced the devil. That the devil in such stories frequently stood in the place of a heathen god is evident from the circumstance, that offerings must be made to him in crossways, those ancient places of sacrifice[1].

But heathenism itself entertained the belief in certain beings hostile alike to gods and men, and at the same time possessed of extraordinary powers, on account of which their aid frequently appeared desirable. We shall presently see how in the Popular Tales the devil is often made to act the part which more genuine traditions assign to the giant race, and how he not unfrequently occupies the place of kind, beneficent spirits[2].

[1] Müller, p. 109. Hence the expressions "diabolo sacrificare," "diaboli in amorem vinum bibere." A black hen was offered to the devil. See vol. iii. p. 256. Harrys, i. No. 55. Temme, Sagen Pommerns, No. 233.

[2] Müller, p. 110.

Let it not excite surprise that, in the popular stories and popular belief, Christ and the saints are frequently set in the place of old mythologic beings[1]. Many a tradition, which in one place is related of a giant or the devil, is in another told of Christ, of Mary, or of some saint. As formerly the *minne* (memory, remembrance, love) of the gods was drunk[2], so now a cup was emptied to the memory or love of Christ and the saints, as St. John's *minne*, Gertrud's *minne*. And, as of old, in conjurations and various forms of spells, the heathen deities were invoked, so, after the conversion, Christ and the saints were called on. Several religious usages which were continued became in the popular creed attached to a feast-day or to a Christian saint, although they had formerly applied to a heathen divinity[3]. In like manner old heathen myths passed over to Christian saints[4], some of which even in their later form sound heathenish enough, as that the soul, on the first night of its separation, comes to St. Gertrud. That in the period immediately following the conversion, the heathen worship of the dead was mingled with the Christian adoration of saints, we have already seen from the foregoing; and the manner in which Clovis venerated St. Martin, shows that he regarded him more as a heathen god than as a Christian saint. It will excite little or no surprise that the scarcely converted king of the Franks sent to the tomb of the saint, as to an oracle, to learn the

[1] For instances see vol. iii. pp. 162–169, 171, 176–179.

[2] Goth. man (*pl.* munum, *pret.* munda), *I think, remember*, whence Ohg. minna = minia, *amor*; minnôn = miniôn, *amare, to remember the beloved*. In O. Nor. there is man, munum, and also minni, *memoria*. minna, *recordari*. Grimm, D. M. p. 52, which see for further details.

[3] Instances are the fires kindled on St. John's day and the usages on St. Martin's day. See vol. iii. pp. 139, 142.

[4] A striking instance of this is the second Merseburg poem with its several parodies. See pp. 23, *sq*.

issue of a war he had commenced against the Wisigoths [1], as similar transmutations of heathen soothsaying and drawing of lots into apparently Christian ceremonies are to be found elsewhere [2].

We will now add two instances, one of which will show how an individual mentioned in the New Testament has so passed into popular tradition as to completely occupy the place of a heathen goddess, while the other will make it evident how heathen forms of worship can, through various modifications, gradually assume a Christian character.

Herodias is by Burchard of Worms [3] compared with Diana. The women believed that they made long journeys with her, on various animals, during the hours of the night, obeyed her as a mistress, and on certain nights were summoned to her service. According to Ratherius, bishop of Verona (ob. 974), it was believed that a third part of the world was delivered into her subjection [4]. The author of Reinardus informs us that she loved John the Baptist, but that her father, who disapproved of her love, caused the saint to be beheaded. The afflicted maiden had his

[1] Gregor. Tur. II. 37.

[2] Müller, p. 110. Conc. Autissiod. a. 578, c. 3. "Non licet ad sortilegos vel ad auguria respicere; nec ad *sortes*, quas *sanctorum* vocant, vel quas de ligno aut de pane faciunt, adspicere." According to the Lex Frisionum, Tit. 14, two little staves, one of which was marked with a cross, were laid on the altar or on a relic. A priest or an innocent boy took up one of them with prayer.

[3] 10, 1. (from the Conc. Ancyran. a. 314): "Illud etiam non omittendum, quod quædam scelerate mulieres, retro post Satanam conversæ, dæmonum illusionibus et phantasmatibus seductæ, credunt se et profitentur nocturnis horis cum *Diana*, paganorum dea, vel cum *Herodiade* et innumera multitudine mulierum equitare super quasdam bestias, et multa terrarum spatia intempestæ noctis silentio pertransire, ejusque jussionibus velut dominæ obedire, et certis noctibus ad ejus servitium evocari."

[4] Opera, edit. Ballerini, p. 20. D. M. p. 260.

head brought to her, but as she was covering it with tears and kisses, it raised itself in the air and blew the damsel back, so that from that time she hovers in the air. Only in the silent hours of night until cockcrowing has she rest, and sits then on oaks and hazels. Her sole consolation is, that, under the name of *Pharaildis*, a third part of the world is in subjection to her [1].

That heathen religious usages gradually gave rise to Christian superstitions will appear from the following. It was a custom in the paganism both of Rome and Germany to carry the image or symbol of a divinity round the fields, in order to render them fertile. At a later period the image of a saint or his symbol was borne about with the same object [2]. Thus in the Albthal, according to popular belief, the carrying about of St. Magnus' staff drove away the field mice. In the Freiburg territory the same staff was employed to extirpate the caterpillars [3].

Of all the divinities, of whom mention has been already made, Wodan alone appears to have survived in the north

[1] Lenit honor luctum, minuit *reverentia* pœnam,
Pars hominum mœstæ tertia servit heræ.
Quercubus et corylis a noctis parte secunda
Usque nigri ad galli carmina prima sedet.
Nunc ea nomen habet *Pharaildis*, *Herodias* ante
Saltria, nec subiens nec subeunda pari.

Reinardus, i. 1159–1164. Müller, p. 112; Grimm, D. M. p. 262.

[2] Eccard, Franc. Orient. i. 437.

[3] Müller, p. 113. Act. Sanct. ii. p. 774. "In agrum Friburg, quod est in Brisgoia circumjectum, aliquot annis adeo copiosa sæviterque grassata erant insecta, ut vix jam herbæ quid excresceret, sed omnia veluti nimiis solibus torrida ruberent. Motus diuturno hoc malo urbis ejus magistratus enixe petiit, ut adversus diros vermes afferretur sacra *cambutta* Quæ ubi allata est a quodam S. Magni cœnobita, *eaque campi prataque illa lustrata*, eodem adhuc anno, qui seculi hujus fuit XI (1711), tellus læto herbarum vigore convestiri; vermes pars migrare alio, pars emori. Ut tanti beneficii perennaret memoria, decreverere Friburgenses posthac natalem S. Magni habere sacrum et festum." Comp. Schreiber's Taschenbuch für Geschichte und Alterthum in Süddeutschland, 1839, p. 329.

of Germany. From the following customs it will appear that he was regarded as a god, in whose hand rested the thriving of the fruits of the field.

In Meklenburg it was formerly a custom at the rye-harvest to leave at the end of every field a little strip of grain unmowed; this with the ears the reapers plaited together and sprinkled it. They then walked round the bunch, took off their hats, raised their sithes, and called on Wodan thrice in the following verses :—

Wode, hale *dynem rosse* nu voder,	*Wode*, fetch now fodder *for thy horse*,
nu distel unde dorn,	now thistles and thorn,
thom andren jahr beter korn !	for another year better corn !

The corn thus left standing for the horse of the god was a simple offering to the bestower of the harvest. At the mansions of the nobility and gentry, it was a custom, when the rye was cut, to give *Wodel-beer*. On a *Wednes*day people avoided all work in flax or sowing linseed, lest the horse of the god, who with his dogs was often heard in the fields, might tread it down [1].

With these customs a custom of the Mark may be compared. In the neighbourhood of the former monastery of Diesdorf, during the whole rye-harvest, a bundle of ears is left standing in every field, which is called the *Vergodendeel's Struus*. When all is mowed, the people, in holyday attire, proceed to the field with music, and bind this bundle round with a variegated riband, then leap over it and dance round it. Lastly the principal reaper cuts it with his sithe and throws it to the other sheaves. In like manner they go from field to field, and finally return to the village singing: "Nun danket alle Gott," and then from farm to farm, at each of which some harvest lines are repeated. The name of this harvest festival is *Vergodendeel*,

[1] Müller, p. 115.

which is said to signify *remuneration for the hard harvest-work*, and is to be met with also in some of the neighbouring villages. From among the several harvest-verses we select the following :—

Ich sage einen ärndtekranz,	I saw a harvest-garland,
es ist aber ein Vergutentheils kranz.	but it is a *Vergutentheil's* garland.
Dieser kranz ist nicht von disteln und dornen,	This garland is not of thistles and thorns,
sondern von reinem auserlesenem winterkorne,	but from clean, selected winter-corn,
es sind auch viele ähren darin ;	there are also many ears therein ;
so mannich ahr,	so many ears,
so mannich gut jahr,	so many good years,
so mannich körn	so many corns,
so mannich wispeln auf den wirth seinen börn (boden)[2].	so many *wispels*[1] for the master's granary.

As the resemblance between this custom and the Mecklenburg one is obvious, the "Vergodendeels struus" may without hesitation be explained by *Fro Goden deels strauss*, i. e. the *strauss* or wisp, which Fro (Lord) Wodan gets for his share[3]. Hence a similar harvest custom in Lower Saxony, at which *Fru Gaue* is invoked, may likewise refer to Wodan. When the reapers mow the rye, they leave some straws standing, twine flowers among them, and, after the completion of their labour, assemble round the wisp thus left standing, take hold of the ears and cry :—

Fru Gaue, haltet ju fauer,	*Fru Gaue*, hold your fodder,
düt jar up den wagen,	this year on the wagon,
dat andar jar up der kare.	the next year on the cart.

It will excite but little surprise that in the uncertainty of

[1] A wispel = 24 bushels.

[2] Müller, p. 116. Kuhn, Märk. Sagen, p. VI, and p. 339.

[3] We must here bear in mind the dialectic form *Gwodan* (*Goden*). On the Elbe Wodan is still called *Fru Wod*. Lisch, Meklenb. Jahrb. 2, 133.

later popular tradition this appellation[1] has afterwards been attributed to a female divinity.

The names of the other gods have passed out of the memory of the people. Of the worship of Donar (Thor) there is, perhaps, still a faint trace in the custom, that in Meklenburg the country people formerly thought it wrong to perform certain work on a *Thurs*day, as hopping, etc.[2]

Of the goddesses, Wodan's wife, Frigg, was, till comparatively recent times, still living in the popular traditions of Lower Saxony, under the name of *Fru Frecke*[3], but now seems defunct. In the neighbourhood of Dent in Yorkshire the country people, at certain seasons, particularly in autumn, have a procession, and perform old dances, one of which they call the giants' dance. The principal giant they call *Woden*, and his wife *Frigga*. The chief feature of the spectacle is, that two swords are swung round the neck of a boy and struck together without hurting him[4].

But in the popular traditions of the Germans the memory still lives of several female divinities, who do not appear in the Northern system. Goddesses can longer maintain themselves in the people's remembrance, because they have an importance for the contracted domestic circle. But their character, through length of time and Christianity, is so degraded, that they usually appear more as terrific, spectral beings than as goddesses. Whether their names even are correct, or have sprung out of mere secondary names or epithets, whether several, who appear

[1] Goth. Frauja, *dominus*, whence the modern feminines Frau, Fru, *domina, lady*. The masculine is no longer extant.

[2] Müller, p. 116.

[3] Eccard de Orig. Germ. p. 398: "Celebratur in plebe Saxonica *Fru Frecke*, cui eadem munia tribuuntur, quæ Superiores Saxones Holdæ suæ adscribunt."

[4] Grimm, D. M. p. 280, from a communication by Kemble. Müller, p. 121.

under various names, were not originally identical, a supposition rendered probable by a striking resemblance in the traditions, can no longer be decided. We can here only simply repeat what popular tradition relates of them[1].

Frau Holda, or Holle, still survives in Thuringian and Hessian, as well as in Markish and Frankish tradition and story. The name of this goddess signifies either *the kind* (holde) or *the dark, obscure*[2]. She is represented as a being that directs the aërial phenomena, imparts fruitfulness to the earth, presides over rural labours and spinning. She appears likewise as a divinity connected with water, as she dwells in wells and ponds, and particularly in the 'Hollenteich' (so called from her) in the Meissner. From her well children come, and women, who descend into it, become healthy and fruitful. But she also takes persons drowned to her, and is so far a goddess of the nether world, a circumstance that is alluded to in the tradition that she has her abode in mountains[3], in which, as we shall see, the souls of the departed dwell. On account of these manifold and important functions, Holda, in the time of heathenism, must, no doubt, have been a divinity of high rank. Other traditions concerning her are more obscure and difficult to explain. Burchard of Worms (p. 194[a]) mentions, as a popular belief, that some women believed that on certain nights they rode with her on all kinds of animals, and belonged to her train, according to which she completely occupies the place of Diana and Herodias; and it is still a popular belief in Thuringia, that the witches ride with *the Holle* to the Horselberg, and

[1] Müller, p. 121.

[2] The word is connected either with hold, *propitious, kind*, O. Nor. hollr, or with O. Nor. hulda, *obscurity, darkness*. D. M. p. 219.

[3] E. g. in the Horselberg near Eisenach. See p. 243.

that, like Wodan, she leads the Wild Host. It is also said that she has bristling, matted hair.

This goddess had apparently two chief festivals, one in the twelve nights of Christmas, during which she makes her tour; the other at Shrovetide, when she returns[1].

Frau Berchta is particularly at home among the Upper German races, in Austria, Bavaria, Swabia, Alsace, Switzerland, also in some districts of Thuringia and Franconia. She is even more degraded in popular story than Holda. She also appears in the twelve nights as a female with shaggy hair, to inspect the spinners, when fish and porridge (Brei)[2] are to be eaten in honour of her, and all the distaffs must be spun off. She is also the queen of the 'Heimchen' (little elementary spirits), who by watering the fields rendered the soil fertile, while she ploughed beneath the surface, and so far has claims to the character of an earth-goddess and promoter of the fertility of the land[3]. To those who mend her chariot she gives the chips by way of payment, which prove to be gold[4].

Between Berchta and Holle there is unquestionably a considerable resemblance, although their identity is extremely doubtful, as they apparently belong to different German races. The name of Berchta (Berhta, Perahta, Bertha) signifies *resplendent, shining*, with which the Welsh substantive berth, *perfection, beauty*, and the adjective berth, *beautiful, rich*, may be compared. As this goddess appears only in the south of Germany, it is a question whether she did not pass from the Kelts to the German

[1] Müller, p. 122. For the Norwegian Huldra, or Hulla, see vol. ii. pp. 2, 10, 15.

[2] Of those who have eaten other food than her festival-dishes she rips open the bodies, takes out the forbidden viands, stuffs them with chaff, and sews them up again with a ploughshare and an iron chain. Grimm, D. S. No. 268; Abergl. No. 525.

[3] Müller, p. 124.

[4] Grimm, D. M. p. 252.

races. We will not decide in the affirmative, though it is worthy of remark that the name enters also into French heroic lore. Bertha with *the great foot*, or with *the goose's foot*, was, according to tradition, the daughter of Flore and Blancheflor, the wife of Pepin and mother of Charles the Great. In France, too, the phrase *the time when Bertha span* is used to express days long since gone by. It was also customary to swear by the spinning-wheel of the *reine pedauque*[1].

In German tradition the name of Berchta is given to the so-called *White Lady*, who appears in many houses, when a member of the family is about to die, and, as we have seen, is thought to be the ancestress of the race. She is sometimes seen at night tending and nursing the children, in which character she resembles the Keltic fairy. In other and more wide-spread traditions, the White Lady is an enchanted or spell-bound damsel, who usually every seventh year appears near some mountain or castle, points out treasures, and awaits her release[2]. Sometimes she is seen combing her long locks or drying flax-knots. Some pretend that, like Huldra, she is disfigured by a tail. She wears a white robe, or is clad half in white half in black; her feet are concealed by yellow or green shoes. In her hand she usually carries a bunch of keys, sometimes flowers, or a golden spinning-wheel. These traditions evidently point to a goddess that possesses influence over life and death, and presides over domestic economy; although the glimmering shed on her through the medium

[1] "Au temps que la reine Berthe filait;" in Italian, "nel tempo ove Berta filava," or, "non è più il tempo che Berta filava." Comp. Altdeutsche Wälder, 3, 17, 18. Roman de Berte as Grans Pies, edit. P. Paris, pref. pp. III, IV. She is elsewhere called Frau "Precht mit der langen nas." See Grimm, D. M. pp. 250–260.

[2] She is also called Bertha. See in Harrys, i. No. 3, "Die schöne Bertha von Schweckhäuserberge."

of popular tradition does not enable us to ascertain more of her nature[1].

In the traditions of the Altmark there lives another goddess—Frau Harke, of whom it is related, that in the twelve nights of Christmas she passes through the country, and if by Twelfth-day the maids have not spun off all the flax, she either scratches them or befouls the spinning-wheel. Stories concerning her must formerly have been more numerous. Gobelinus Persona relates, that Frau Hera in the Twelfths flies through the air and bestows abundance[2]. As this account points to an earth-goddess, there seems no doubt that the *Erce*[3], invoked as mother of earth in an Anglo-Saxon spell for the fertilizing of the land, is identical with her[4].

In German popular story other names are mentioned of female beings, but who are enveloped even in greater obscurity than the before-mentioned. The Werre, who is at home in Voigtland, inspects, like Frau Holle, the spinners on Christmas eve, and, if all the distaffs are not spun off, befouls the flax. Like Berchta, she rips up the bodies of those who have not eaten porridge. The Stempe tramples on those children who on New Year's day will not eat. The Sträggele appears in Lucerne the Wednesday before Christmas, and teazes the maids, if they have not spun their daily task[5]. Wanne Thekla is in

[1] Müller, p. 126.

[2] Cosmodrom. Act. vi. Meibom. Scriptt. Rer. Germ. i. p. 235: "Inter festum Nativitatis Christi ad festum Epiphaniæ Domini, domina *Hera* volat per aëra. Dicebant vulgares prædicto tempore: *Vrowe Hera*, seu corrupto nomine *Vro Here de vlughet*, et credebant illam sibi conferre rerum temporalium abundantiam."

[3] Thorpe, Analecta Anglo-Saxonica, p. 116, 2nd edit. Grimm, D. M. p. cxxix.

Erce, Erce, Erce,	Erce, Erce, Erce,
eorðan módor, etc.	mother of earth, etc.

[4] Müller, p. 127.

[5] Grimm, D. M. pp. 251, 255; D. S. 269.

the Netherlands the queen of the elves and witches[1]. This tradition is probably of Keltic origin, which may likewise be the case with the following one. DOMINA ABUNDIA, or DAME HABONDE, who is mentioned by Guilielmus Alvernus, bishop of Paris (ob. 1248)[2], and who also figures in the Roman de la Rose[3], is said, on certain nights, accompanied by other women, who are likewise styled *Dominæ*, and all clad in white[4], to enter houses and partake of the viands placed for them. Their appearance in a house is a sign of good luck and prosperity. In these white-clad females we at once recognise the Keltic fairies. The name Habundia has no connection with the Latin *abundantia*, from which Guilielmus Alvernus would derive it[5].

Together with Habundia Guilielmus Alvernus places SATIA, whose name he derives from *satietas*. The goddess BENSOZIA, whom Augerius episcopus Conseranus mentions as a being with whom, as with Herodias, Diana and Holda, the women were believed to ride at night, may be identical with her, and her name be only a fuller form of Satia[6].

The foregoing are the principal memorials of heathen divinities that have been preserved in Christian times. Together with them we find traces of that living conception of nature, which is perceptible among the Germans from the remotest period. The sun and moon were always regarded as personal beings, they were addressed as *Frau* and *Herr* (Domina and Dominus)[7], and enjoyed a degree of veneration with genuflexions and other acts of adoration[8]. To certain animals, as cats, the idea of something

[1] See vol. iii. p. 265. [2] Opera, Paris, 1674, i. 1036, 1066, 1068.

[3] Edit. Méon, vv. 18622, *sqq*.

[4] Nymphæ albæ, dominæ bonæ, dominæ nocturnæ. Wolf, Niederl. Sagen, No. 231.

[5] Müller, p. 129. [6] Ib. p. 130. [7] See page 5, *note* [2].

[8] Vita Eligii, II. 16: Nullus dominos solem aut lunam vocet. Nic. Magni de Gawe de Superstitionibus (written in 1415: comp. D. M.

ghostly and magical was attached; to others, as the cuckoo, was ascribed the gift of prophecy; while others, as snakes, had influence on the happiness of men, or are accounted sacred and inviolable. Trees, also, even to a much later period, were regarded as animated beings, on which account they were addressed by the title of *Frau*; or it was believed that personal beings dwelt in them, to whom a certain reverence was due[1].

Of processions and festivals, which have pretensions to a heathen origin, we can give only a brief notice.

As, according to Tacitus, the goddess Nerthus was drawn in a carriage in a festive procession, through the several districts, so in Christian times, particularly during the spring, we meet with customs, a leading feature of which consists of a tour or procession. Such festive processions are either through a town, or a village, or through several localities, or round the fields of a community, or about the *mark* or boundary. On these occasions a symbol was frequently carried about, either an animal having reference to some divinity, or else some utensil. A procession may here be cited which, in the year 1133, took place after a complete heathenish fashion, notwithstanding the strenuous opposition of the clergy. In the forest near Inda[2], a ship was constructed, and furnished beneath with wheels; this was drawn by weavers (compelled to the task), harnessed before it, through Aix-la-Chapelle, Maestricht, Tongres, Looz and other localities, was everywhere received with great joy, and attended by a multitude

p. xliv): Itaque hodie inveniuntur homines.....qui cum novilunium primo viderint, flexis genibus adorant, vel deposito capucio vel pileo inclinato capite honorant alloquendo et suscipiendo. Immo etiam plures jejunant ipso die novilunii. See also D. M. p. 668, and Abergl. No. 112: "If a woman at going to bed salutes the stars of heaven, neither vulture nor hawk will take a chicken from her."

[1] See vol. ii. p. 168, and vol. iii. p. 182. Müller, p. 130.

[2] Inden in the territory of Jülich, afterwards Cornelimünster.

singing and dancing. The celebration lasted for twelve days. Whosoever, excepting the weavers who drew the ship—an office they regarded as ignominious—touched the same, must give a pledge, or otherwise redeem himself[1]. This custom maintained itself to a much later period in Germany, as by a protocol of the council of Ulm, dated on the eve of St. Nicholas, 1330, the procession with a plough or a ship is prohibited. A connection between the above custom and the worship of the Isis of Tacitus, whose symbol was a ship, seems in a high degree probable; it had, at least, reference to a goddess, as, according to the original narrative, the women took part in it with bacchanalian wantonness[2].

Mention also occurs of a procession with a plough, about Shrovetide, in other parts of Germany, viz. on the Rhine, in Upper Saxony and Franconia, with the remarkable addition, that young unmarried women were either placed on the plough, or were compelled to draw it[3].

Another procession, called *The driving, or carrying, out of Death* (winter), took place formerly about Midlent, usually on the Sunday *Lætare* (the fourth in Lent), and sometimes on the Sunday *Oculi* (the third in Lent), in Franconia and Thuringia, also in Meissen, Voigtland, Lusatia and Silesia. Children carried a figure of straw or wood, or a doll in a box, or stuck on a pole, through the place, singing all the time, then cast the figure into the water or burnt it. In its stead a fir-tree was brought back to the place. If the procession met any cattle on their return they beat them

[1] See a circumstantial account of this custom in Grimm, D. M. pp. 237, *sqq.*

[2] Müller, p. 133. Rodolfi Chron. Abbatiæ S. Trudonis, lib. ix. "Sub fugitiva adhuc luce diei imminente luna, matronarum catervæ abjecto femineo pudore audientes strepitum hujus vanitatis, sparsis capillis de stratis suis exiliebant, aliæ seminudæ, aliæ simplice tantum clamide circumdutæ, chorosque ducentibus circa navim impudenter irrumpendo se admiscebant."

[3] Müller, p. 134.

with sticks, believing that they thereby rendered them fruitful[1].

In other places the beginning of the beautiful season is represented as the entrance of a benignant divinity into the country. In Thuringia, on the third day of Whitsuntide, a young peasant, called the *green man,* or *lettuce-king,* is in the forest enveloped in green boughs, placed on a horse, and amid rejoicings conducted into the village, where all the people are assembled. The Schulze (Bailiff or Mayor) must then guess thrice who is concealed under the green covering. If he does not guess, he must forfeit a quantity of beer; and even if he does guess, he must, nevertheless, give it. Of the same class is the procession of the Maigraf (Count of the May), (called also the *King of the May,* or *King of Flowers*), which formerly, usually on the first of May, took place with great rejoicings, not only in Lower Germany, but in Denmark[2] and Sweden. Attended by a considerable company, and adorned with flowers and garlands, the Count of the May paraded through the several districts, where he was received by the young girls, who danced round him, one of whom he chose for *Queen of the May*[3].

We shall conclude this sketch of the festive processions with a short notice of some other heathen customs.

It is a wide-spread custom in Germany to kindle bonfires on certain days, viz. at Easter and St. John's (Midsummer) day, less usually at Christmas and Michaelmas. In Lower Germany the Easter-fires are the most usual, which are generally lighted on hills; while in the south of Germany the St. John's fires are the commonest, and were formerly kindled in the market-places, or before the gates of the town. The ceremonies connected with these fires are more and more forgotten. In former times old and young, high and low regarded the kindling of them

[1] Müller, p. 135. [2] See vol. ii. p. 266. [3] Müller, p. 139.

as a great festival. These customs had apparently an agrarian object, as it is still believed that so far as the flame of the Easter-fire spreads its light will the earth be fertile and the corn thrive for that year. These fires, too, were, according to the old belief, beneficial for the preservation of life and health to those who came in contact with the flame. On which account the people danced round the St. John's fire, or sprang over it, and drove their domestic animals through it. The coal and ashes of the Easter-fire were carefully collected and preserved as a remedy for diseases of the cattle. For a similar reason it was a custom to drive the cattle when sick over particular fires called *need-fires* (Notfeuer), which, with certain ceremonies, were kindled by friction[1]; on which account the St. John's fire is strictly to be regarded as a need-fire kindled at a fixed period. Fire is the sacred, purifying and propitiating element, which takes away all imperfections[2].

A similar salutiferous power is, according to the still existing popular belief, possessed by water, particularly when

[1] Indic. Superst. c. 15. De igne fricato de ligno.

[2] Müller, p. 141. For details relating to these fires see Grimm, D. M. pp. 570–594. Particularly worthy of notice is the employment of a cart-wheel, by the turning of which the need-fire is kindled. In some places, at the Easter-fire, a burning wheel is rolled down a hill. In the Mark a cart-wheel is set on fire and danced round. A wheel, too, is hung over the doors of the houses for the thriving of the cattle. Märk. Sagen, p. 362. Comp. Grimm, D. M. 1st edit. Abergl. No. 307: "Whoever puts a wheel over his doorway has luck in his house." This custom of kindling sacred fires on certain days prevails throughout almost the whole of Europe, and was known to Antiquity, particularly in Italy. The Kelts kindled such fires, on the first of May, to the god Beal (thence even now called *bealtine*), and on the first of November to the god Sighe. Leo, Malb. Gl. i. 33. But whether the need-fire is of Keltic origin remains a doubt. "The fires lighted by the [Scottish] Highlanders on the first of May, in compliance with a custom derived from the pagan times, are termed the *Beltane-Tree*. It is a festival celebrated with various superstitious rites, both in the north of Scotland and in Wales." Scott's Minstrelsy, iii. p. 324.

drawn in silence on certain holyday nights, as St. John's or Christmas, from certain springs that were formerly sacred to some divinity. To wash in such water imparts health and beauty for the whole year [1].

On Death, and the condition of souls after death, a few words are necessary. Even in Christian ideas of hell, the remains of pagan belief are here and there discernible. Among these may be reckoned that the devil has his habitation in the north [2], as in the Scandinavian belief the nether world lies in the north. According to some traditions, the entrance to hell leads, through long, subterranean passages, to a gate; in the innermost space lies the devil fast bound, as Utgarthiloeus is chained in the lower world [3]. According to another tradition, the emperor Charles, when conducted to hell by an angel, passed through deep dells full of fiery springs, as, according to the Scandinavian belief, the way to Hel's abode led through deep valleys, in the midst of which is the spring Hvergelmir [4]. The popular tales also relate how a water must be passed before arriving at Hell [5].

According to all appearance, the idea was very general in the popular belief of Scandinavia, that the souls of the departed dwelt in the interior of mountains. This idea at least very frequently presents itself in the Icelandic Sagas, and must have been wide-spread, as it is retained even in Germany to the present day. Of some German mountains it is believed that they are the abodes of the damned. One of these is the Horselberg near Eisenach, which is the habitation of Frau Holle; another is the fabulous Venusberg, in which the Tanhäuser sojourns, and before which the trusty Eckhart sits as a warning

[1] Müller, p. 143.
[2] Cædmon, p. 3. l. 8.
[3] Saxo, p. 431, edit. Müller.
[4] See pp. 12, 13.
[5] Grimm, K. and H. M. No. 29. Müller, p. 389.

guardian[1]. Of other mountains it is also related that heroes of ancient times have been carried into them. Thus the emperor Frederic Barbarossa sits in the Kyffhäuser at a stone table; his beard has already grown twice round the table; when it has grown thrice round he will awake[2]. The emperor Charles sits in the Odenberg, or in the Unterberg[3], and an emperor not named, in the Guckenberg near Fränkishgemünden[4].

Almost all the descriptions of the sojourn of souls after death have this in common, that the nether world was thought to be in the bowels of the earth, that is, in the interior of mountains or at the bottom of waters, and that its aspect was that of a spacious habitation, in which a divine being received the departed. That it was, at the same time, also a belief that the dead in their graves, in a certain manner, continued to live, that they were contented or sad, and heard the voices of those who called—a subject to which we shall presently return—is strictly in contradiction to the other ideas; but, in the first place, heathenism easily tolerated such inconsistencies, and, secondly, the depth of the grave became confounded with the nether world in the bowels of the earth. Thus while,

[1] The relationship of the traditions of Frau Venus and Holda is indubitable. The Venusberg is considered by some as identical with the Horselberg, in which Frau Holle holds her court. Before the Venusberg —according to the preface to the Heldenbuch—sits the trusty Eckhard, and warns people; as he also rides and warns before the Wild Hunt. Grimm, D. S. No. 7. The tradition of the Venusberg first appears in monuments of the fourteenth century.

[2] Grimm, D. S. Nos. 23, 296. Comp. Bechstein, Thür. Sagenschatz, 4, 9–54. See also vol. iii. pp. 101, *sq.* According to another tradition, the emperor Frederic sits in a rocky cavern near Kaiserslautern.

[3] Grimm, D. S. Nos. 26, 28. Mones Anzeiger, 4. 409. Of Wedekind also it is said that he sits in a mountain, called Die Babilonie, in Westphalia, until his time comes. Redecker, Westf. Sagen, No. 21. Similar traditions are in D. S. Nos. 106, 207, and in Mones Anzeiger, 5, 174.

[4] Müller, p. 396.

on the one hand, it was thought that the dead preserved their old bodily aspect, and appeared just as when they sojourned on earth, although the freshness of life had departed; on the other hand there is no lack of passages, according to which a particular form is ascribed to the soul when separated from its body[1].

As mountains, according to the heathen popular belief, were supposed to be the sojourns of the dead, so it was imagined that in the bottom of wells and ponds there was a place for the reception of departed souls. But this belief had special reference to the souls of the drowned, who came to the dwelling of the Nix, or of the sea-goddess Rân. The depths of the water were, however, at the same time, conceived in a more general sense, as the nether world itself. For which reasons persons who otherwise, according to the popular traditions, are conveyed away into mountains, are also supposed to be dwelling in wells and ponds[2]; and the numerous tales current throughout the whole of Germany of towns and castles that have been sunk in the water, and are sometimes to be discerned at the bottom, are probably connected with this idea. It is particularly worthy of notice that beautiful gardens have been imagined to exist under the water[3]. Yet more widespread is the tradition that green meadows exist under water, in which souls have their abode[4]. In an old German poem it is said that these meadows are closed against suicides[5], according to which they would appear to be a detached portion of the nether world[6].

[1] Müller, p. 401.

[2] Thus the emperor Charles is said to sojourn in a well at Nuremberg. D. S. No. 22.

[3] Thus Frau Holla has a garden under her pool or well, from which she distributes all kinds of fruits. D. S. No. 4. Comp. 13, 291, and K. and H. M. No. 24.

[4] Grimm, K. and H. M. No. 61. Wolf, Niederl. Sagen, No. 506.

[5] Flore, 19[b]. [6] Müller, p. 399.

The soul was supposed to bear the form of a bird. Even in Sæmund's Edda it is said, that in the nether world singed birds fly that had been souls [1], and in the popular tales similar ideas occur frequently. The ghost of the murdered mother comes swimming in the form of a duck, or the soul sits in the form of a bird on the grave; the young murdered brother mounts up as a little bird, and the girl, when thrown into the water, rises in the air as a white duck [2]. The frequent conjurations into swans, doves and ravens [3] originate in the same ideas: these birds are the souls of the murdered, a belief which the popular tale ingeniously softening, represents merely as a transformation. With this belief the superstition must be placed in connection, that, when a person dies, the windows should be opened, that the departing soul may fly out [4].

From the popular traditions we also learn that the soul has the form of a snake. It is related that out of the mouth of a sleeping person a snake creeps and goes a long distance, and that what it sees or suffers on its way, the sleeper dreams of [5]. If it is prevented from returning, the

[1] Frá því er at segja,
hvat ek fyrst um sá,
þá ek var í kvölheima kominn:
sviðnir fuglar,
er sálir váru,
flugu svá margir sem mý.

Of that is to be told,
what I first observed,
when I had come into the land of torment:
singed birds,
that had been souls,
flew as many as gnats.

Sólarljóð Str. 53.

It is however to be remarked that the Sólarljóð is a Christian poem, though composed at a period when heathenism still prevailed in the North.

[2] Grimm, K. and H. M. Nos. 11, 13, 21, 47, 96, 135.

[3] Ib. Nos. 9, 25, 49, 93, 123, pp. 103, 221.

[4] Müller, p. 402; Grimm, D. M. 1st edit. Abergl. Nos. 191, 664; Kuhn, Märk. Sagen, p. 367.

[5] When the grave of Charles Martel was opened, a large snake was found in it; such at least is the story, which, moreover, tells us that

person dies. According to other traditions and tales, it would seem that the soul was thought to have the form of a flower, as a lily or a white rose [1].

These ideas may be regarded as the relics of a belief in the transmigration of souls, according to which the soul, after its separation from the body, passes into that of an animal, or even an inanimate object. More symbolic is the belief that the soul appears as a light. Hence the popular superstition that the *ignes fatui*, which appear by night in swampy places, are the souls of the dead. Men, who during life have fraudulently removed landmarks, must, after death, wander about as *ignes fatui*, or in a fiery form [2].

having exhausted his treasures, he gave the tenth, which was the due of the clergy, to his knights to enable them to live. The story of the snake was told by St. Eucherius, bishop of Orleans. See Wolf, Niederl. Sagen, No. 68. Other traditions tell that the soul proceeds from the mouth of a sleeping person in the form of a butterfly, a weasel or mouse. D. S. Nos. 247, 255; D. M. pp. 789, 1036. Goethe alludes to a similar superstition in Faust:

Ach! mitten im Gesange sprang Ein rothes Mauschen ihr aus dem Munde.	Ah! in the midst of her song A red mouseкin sprang out of her mouth.

[1] See vol. iii. p. 271. Grimm, K. and H. M. Nos. 9, 85. The popular tales tell also of persons transformed into lilies or other flowers. K. and H. M. Nos. 56, 76. On the chair of those that will soon die a white rose or lily appears. D. S. Nos. 263, 264; Harrys, i. p. 76. From the grave of one unjustly executed white lilies spring as a token of his innocence; from that of a maiden, three lilies, which no one save her lover may gather; from the mounds of lovers flowery shrubs spring, which entwine together. Also in the Swedish ballads lilies and limes grow out of graves. In the Scottish ballad of Fair Margaret and Sweet William it is said:—

> Out of her breast there sprang a *rose*,
> And out of his a *briar*;
> They grew till they grew unto the church-top,
> And there they tied in a true lovers' knot.

See also the story of Axel and Valdborg in vol. ii. p. 46, where the trees are the *ash*.

[2] Müller, p. 404. See instances of this superstition in vols. ii. and iii.

According to a well-known popular tale, there is a subterranean cavern, in which innumerable lights burn: these are the life-tapers of mortals. When a light is burnt out, the life of the person to whom it belonged is at an end, and he is the property of Death [1].

How do the souls of the departed arrive at their destined abode? German tradition assigns the office of receiving the souls of mortals at their death to dwarfs. Middle High German poems, and also the belief still existing among the people, regard Death as a person, under various names, who when their hour arrives, conducts mortals away by the hand, on a level road, dances with them [2], sets them on his horse, receives them in his train, invites them to his dwelling, lays them in chains, or —which is probably a later idea—fights with them, and with spear, dart, sword or sithe, slays them [3].

In some parts of Germany it is a custom to place a piece of money in the mouth of a corpse [4], probably to pay the passage-money, or defray the expenses of the journey [5].

As the dead in the nether world continue their former course of life [6], it naturally follows that they are not

[1] See K. and H. M. No. 44. Müller, p. 404. The same idea is contained in the popular superstitions. On Christmas eve the light may not be extinguished, else some one will die. Grimm, Abergl. Nos. 121, 168. In the Albthal, on a wedding-day, during the service, a triple twisted taper is borne by each of the bridal party: the person whose taper is first burnt out will be the first to die. Schreiber's Taschenbuch, 1839, p. 325.

[2] According to the preface to the Heldenbuch, a dwarf fetches Dietrich of Bern with the words: "Thou shalt go with me, thy kingdom is no more in this world." According to Christian ideas, angels or devils receive the departed souls, an office particularly assigned to Michael.

[3] The dance of death cannot, however, be traced farther back than the fifteenth century. Müller, p. 405.

[4] Grimm, D. M. 1st edit. Abergl. No. 207. Märk. Sagen, Nos. 19, 30.

[5] Müller, p. 408.

[6] Many of the German popular stories make the dead to appear as they

wholly estranged from earthly life. No oblivious draught has been given them, but the remembrance of their earthly doings cleaves to them. Hence they gladly see again the places frequented by them while on earth; but they are particularly disquieted when anything still attaches them to earthly life. A buried treasure allows them no rest until it is raised [1]; an unfinished work, an unfulfilled promise forces them back to the upper world [2].

In like manner the dead attach themselves to their kindred and friends. Hence the belief is very general that they will return to their home and visit them, and that they sympathize with their lot [3]. Thus a mother returns to the upper world to tend her forsaken children [4], or children at their parents' grave find aid, who, as higher powers, grant them what they wish [5]. Slain warriors also rise again to help their comrades to victory [6]. But it disturbs the repose of the dead when they are too much wept

were in life and to follow the same pursuits. In ruined castles, knights in their ancient costume hold tournaments and sit at the joyous feast; the priest reads mass, the wild huntsman and the robber continue their handiwork after death. D. S. Nos. 527, 828; Niederl. Sagen, Nos. 422, 424, 425; Mones Anzeiger, 4. 307; Harrys, i. No. 51 et alibi.

[1] Grimm, Abergl. No. 606, comp. 207, 588.

[2] Müller, p. 410.

[3] In the neighbourhood of Courtrai it is a custom, when conveying a corpse to the churchyard, to repeat a Pater noster at every crossway, that the dead, when he wishes to return home, may be able to find the way. Niederl. Sagen, No. 317. The dead usually re-appear on the ninth day. Grimm, Abergl No. 856. According to the Eyrb. Saga, c. 54, the dead come to their funeral feast.

[4] For a mother that has died in childbirth the bed is to be made during six weeks, that she may lie in it when she comes to give her child the breast. Niederl. Sagen, No. 326.

[5] Grimm, K. and H. M. No. 21. Comp. Hervarar Saga and Udvalgte Danske Viser, i. p. 253.

[6] Grimm, D. S. No. 327. Comp. Wunderhorn, i. 73, 74. The dead also wreak vengeance. Niederl. Sagen, No. 312. It is an old belief that if a person is murdered on Allhallows' day, he can have no rest in the grave until he has taken revenge on his murderer. Ib. No. 323.

for and mourned after. Every tear falls into their coffin and torments them; in which case they will rise up and implore those they have left behind to cease their lamentation [1].

[1] Müller, p. 412. Grimm. K. and H. M. No. 109. This belief is feelingly expressed in the old Danish ballad of Aage and Else:—

Hver en Gang Du glædes,
Og i Din Hu er glad,
Da er min Grav forinden
Omhængt med Rosens Blad.

Every time thou 'rt joyful,
And in thy mind art glad,
Then is my grave within
Hung round with roses' leaves.

Hver Gang Du Dig græmmer,
Og i Din Hu er mod,
Da er min Kiste forinden
Som fuld med levret Blod.

Every time thou grievest,
And in thy mind art sad,
Then is within my coffin
As if full of clotted blood.

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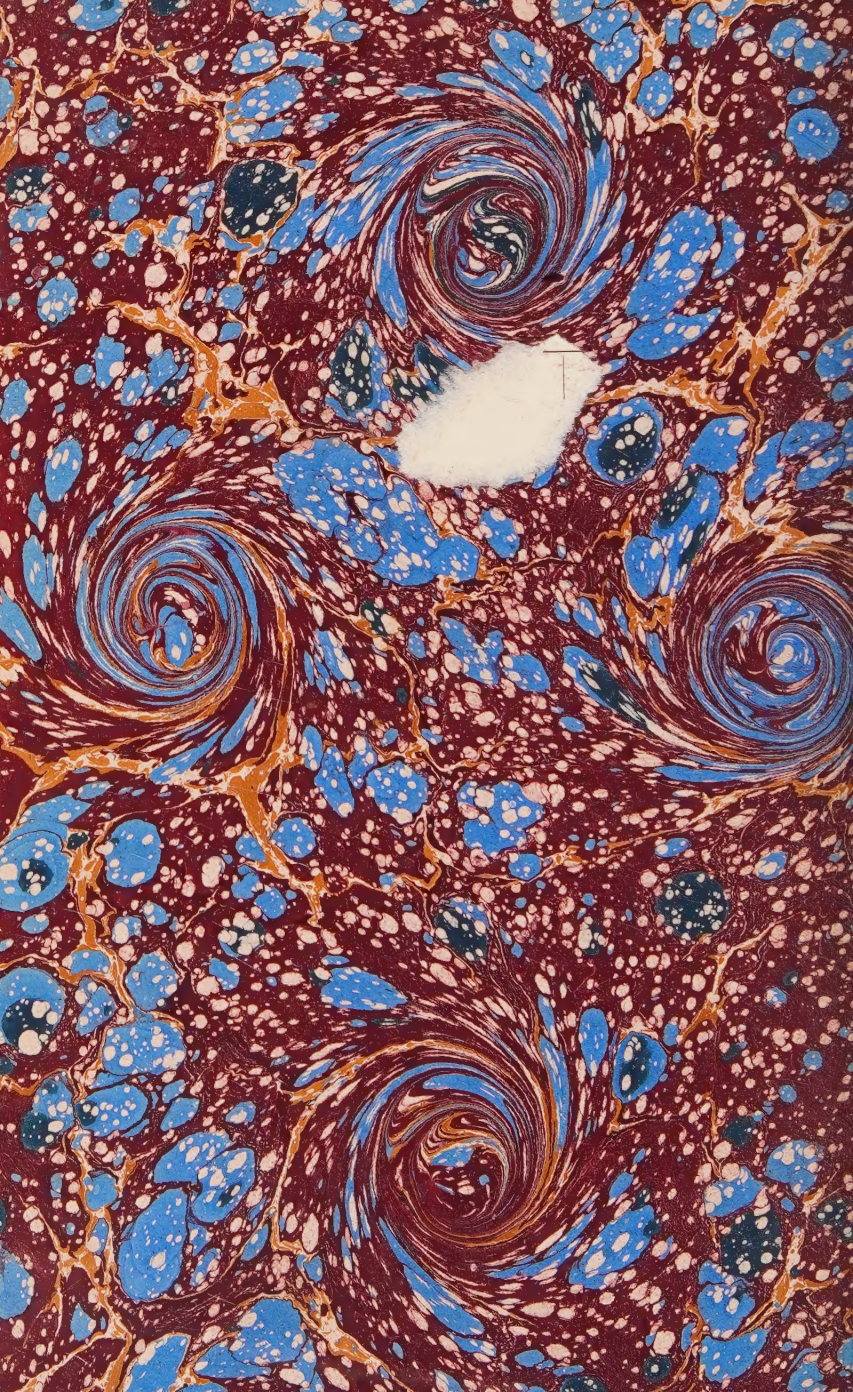

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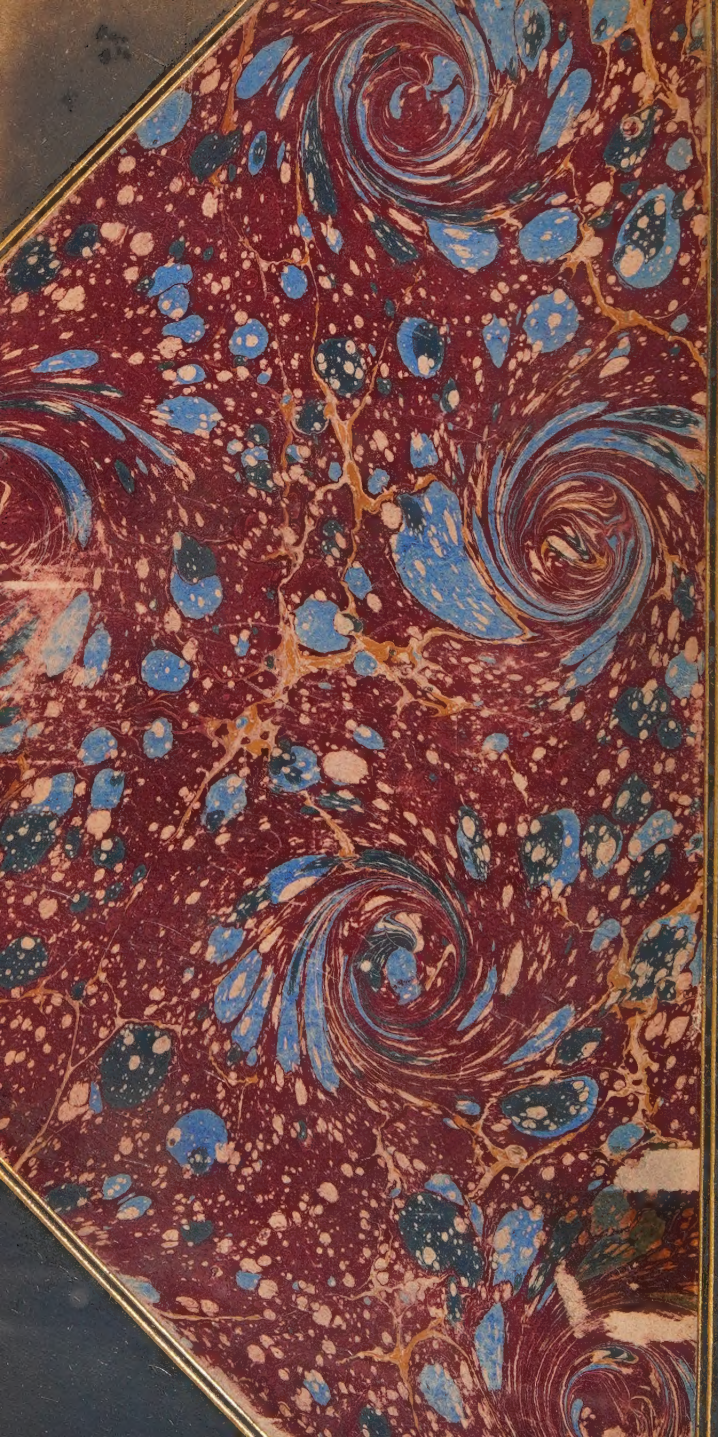
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